

HOUSING ELEMENT

1985 - 1992

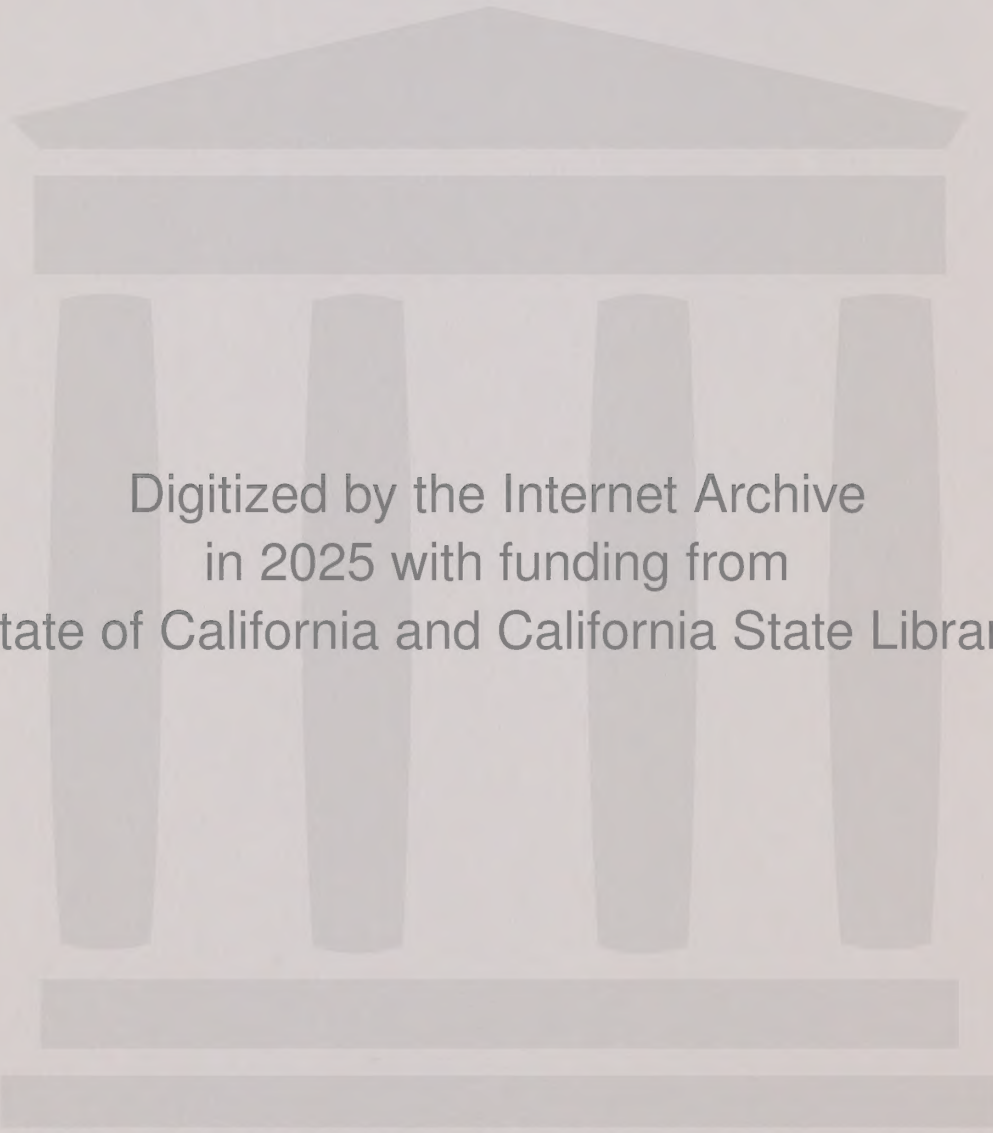
CITY OF LOS BANOS

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CITY OF LOS BANOS  
HOUSING ELEMENT OF THE GENERAL PLAN  
1985 - 1992

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January 1986





# HOUSING ELEMENT

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## I N T R O D U C T I O N

Section 65302(c) of the California Government Code requires all local governments to adopt and periodically update the Housing Element of the City's General Plan. The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) describes guidelines which local Housing Element must follow. The Guideline's major features are:

1. inventory the housing needs of the community for all socio-economic groups;
2. analyze the availability of adequate sites for housing, considering the accessibility to services and the feasibility of providing public facilities;
3. analyze and evaluate the obstacles and constraints in developing housing for all socio-economic groups, including market, governmental and physical constraints;
4. formulate goals, policies and objectives which will serve as the desires of the community and the region in fulfilling the needs for housing;
5. contain an implementation section which will act as the course of action and the time-frame for solving the problems and fulfilling housing and related needs; and
6. include an Environmental Review.

This Housing Element has been prepared through the joint efforts of the Los Banos City Council, the Los Banos Planning Commission, and the citizens of Los Banos, most specifically, the Housing Element's Citizens Advisory Committee. The ten members of the Advisory Committee were appointed by the Council and reflect the diversity of the City.

The planning period for this Housing Element Update was originally a five-year span, from 1985 to 1990. This Element was originally drafted for the five year period. The Department of Housing and Community Development has allowed expansion of the planning period by two years, to 1992. Projections and objectives reflecting this longer planning time frame have been incorporated into the Housing Element.

During a series of meetings among the Planning Commission, Advisory Committee and Planning Staff, housing data was reviewed, issues identified, and

housing policies and programs adopted. This process was well covered by the local newspaper, further enhancing citizen input. From this cooperative effort of the Planning Commission, the Citizens Advisory Committee, and Staff has emerged a Housing Element which addresses the concerns of both the state and the city.

The Housing Element is composed of nine (9) major sections:

- Demographics
- Household characteristics and special needs households
- Housing market characteristics
- Local governmental constraints
- Non-governmental constraints
- Future housing needs
- Land inventory
- Performance of the 1978 Housing Element Implementation Program
- Goals, Objectives, Policies, and Programs.



## P E R S P E C T I V E

The City of Los Banos is situated in the fertile San Joaquin Valley near the Coast Range. The City is in the geographical center of California. The City is a "crossroads", being bisected by State Highways 152, 165, and 33, and with Interstate Highway 5 six miles to the west. Los Banos is an agricultural community with important commercial services to travelers, including the transportation industry.

The City was a small town of approximately 5,000 population until the early 1960s and the development of the San Luis Water project. This project provided an economic and growth stimulus and the City's population and housing activities doubled by 1970. When the project terminated, however, growth stagnated until the late 1970s. During the first five years of the 1980s population growth has increased a steady three percent (3%) per year. Much of this population increase is due to people moving into the City from urban areas to take advantage of the City's quality of life and relative affordability of housing. The City currently has a population of approximately 12,100. The City of Los Banos is approximately 5.5 square miles in size, excluding the sewage treatment plant. Of the 3,315 acres of land within the community, approximately thirty nine percent (39%) is vacant with about one-third of the vacant land zoned for housing.

### HOUSING ELEMENT'S RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS

The Los Banos General Plan, which includes all nine (9) state mandated elements was prepared between 1963 and 1978. In developing this Housing Element Update care has been taken to ensure consistency with other elements, which balance Housing, Commercial, Industrial, and Public Facilities Development. An Update of the remainder of the General Plan should be completed within the next several years. The data, projections, goals, and objectives of the Housing Element will be incorporated into the future General Plan Update.

## ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires an analysis of the environmental impacts of proposed public and private projects which may have a significant effect on the environment. This proposed Housing Element is designed to protect and balance the environment while providing for growth to take place. This City also requires environment assessments of individual projects. Because of the mitigations designed in this element and the City's on-going assessment of development, a Negative Declaration of environmental impact is proposed for the Housing Element.



## DEMOGRAPHICS

### POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS AND NEEDS ASSESSMENTS

#### POPULATION

The City of Los Banos has experienced a five percent (5%) annual growth rate during the past twenty five years. This period's growth was skewed during the rapid growth between 1960 and 1964 as a result of the San Luis Water Project and the no growth period which followed. However, in more recent years the City's population has grown at an approximate three percent (3%) annual rate. The State Department of Finance estimates Los Banos' population in January 1985 at 12,102. For planning purposes, the City's population growth rate is estimated to increase at three percent (3%) annually.

TABLE A

#### POPULATION AND PROJECTED POPULATION GROWTH

	<u>1970</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1992</u>
Population	9,188	9,341	10,341	12,102	14,029	14,883
Percent Increase		1.7%	10.7%	17.0%	16.9%	6.1%
Annual Percentage Increase (Straight Line)		.3%	2.1%	3.4%	3.2%	3.1%

SOURCES: U. S. Census 1970, 1980; California Department of Finance  
Population Estimate 1975, 1985

#### AGE OF POPULATION

The City's age distribution is, to a large extent, reflective of trends within the State as available. The City's age distribution is shown in Table B. The fastest growing groups between 1975 and 1980 were pre-school age (0-4) 36.8%, and the elderly (65-74 and 75+) 27.6% and 29.8% respectively. Other increases are also noted in the (5-9), the (20-24), the (25-34), and (60-64) groups. In summary, the very young, the old, and the young working age population has increased. The working age population (20-64) is, however, a smaller overall percentage distribution (53.8%) than that of the State's (61%). The median age of residents increased modestly from 28 to 29 years.

Interpretation of these age distribution changes is risky. How-

ever, one may see an increase in school age children now and in the immediate future as the World War II Baby Boom generation produces a delayed "Baby Boomlet". In fact, while the average household size dropped from 2.97 in 1975 to 2.83 in 1980, the household size estimate for 1985 has risen to 2.96 indicating an increase or at least stabilization of family with children numbers..

TABLE B  
POPULATION AGE DISTRIBUTION

<u>AGE</u>	<u>1960</u> <sup>1</sup>	<u>1970</u> <sup>2</sup>	<u>1975</u> <sup>3</sup>	<u>1980</u> <sup>4</sup>	<u>75-80</u>
75+	120	291	302	392	29.8%
70-74	236	490	579	739	27.6%
65-69					
60-64	186	341	405	490	20.9%
55-59	228	430	493	567	15.0%
50-54	597	1,052	1,078	1,025	-4.9%
45-49					
40-44	778	1,027	1,019	1,031	1.2%
35-39					
30-34	688	1,131	1,337	1,603	19.9%
25-29					
20-24	247	569	735	868	18.1%
15-19	307	893	970	1,013	4.4%
10-14	560	1,020	978	797	-18.5%
5-9	600	1,094	739	871	17.9%
0-4	625	850	691	945	36.7%
TOTAL	5,172	9,188	9,341	10,341	100.0%
MEDIAN AGE			28	29	

SOURCES: 1) U. S. Census (1960); 2) U. S. Census (1970);  
3) California Department of Finance Special  
Census (1975); 4) U. S. Census (1980).

#### ETHNICITY

The City of Los Banos is predominately white, with sizable ethnic sub-groupings of persons of Italian and Portuguese descent. Hispanic persons (i.e., Mexican or Latin American descent) make up a quarter of the population,

while blacks make up 3.5%.

The largest ethnic group in Los Banos is Hispanic (Mexican and Latin-American descent) with 24.8% of the population. Whites are the largest group with 58.5% of the population and blacks the smallest with 3.5% of the residents. The category "other" in the 1980 census is most perplexing, increasing from 3% of the population in 1970 to 12.9% in 1980 and including "whites" in its number. As Los Banos has a low number of Asians and Native Americans, but has a very sizable immigrant Portuguese and Portuguese-American population, this large "other" group may be predominately Portuguese.

TABLE C  
LOS BANOS RACE AND ETHNICITY

	<u>1970</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>%</u>
Population	9,188	100%	10,341	100%
White	5,788	63%	6,059	58.5%
Hispanic	2,756	30%*	2,560	24.8%
Black	368	4%	390	3.8%
Other	276	3%	1,332	12.9%

\* Based on Spanish surname

\*\* Other includes whites

SOURCES: U.S. Census 1970, 1980

#### HANDICAPPED PERSONS

The number of handicapped/disabled persons in Los Banos must be taken into account when planning. Los Banos has a higher percentage of working age disabled persons than does the state. The percentage number of these persons who are prevented from working is also higher than the state average. Los Banos has a lower rate, however, of persons with public transportation disabilities. Although the numbers and percentages of disabled persons are not excessively high, they do indicate a continued need for handicapped accessible transportation, jobs, housing, and social services. This is particularly true among the elderly who have an almost 10% rate of public transportation disabilities.

TABLE D  
WORK DISABLED PERSONS

	<u>LOS BANOS</u>		<u>CALIFORNIA</u>
	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
All persons, ages 16-64	6,374		
With work disability	680	10.7%	8.4%
Prevented from working	370	5.8%	4.3%
SOURCE: U. S. Census, 1980			

TABLE E  
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION DISABILITY

	<u>LOS BANOS</u>		<u>CALIFORNIA</u>
	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
Ages 16 - 64	70	1.1%	1.7%
Ages 65+	105	9.5%	14.4%
SOURCE: U. S. Census, 1980			

#### PERSONS IN GROUP QUARTERS

Group quarters refers to two types of living arrangements - one is a living situation where unrelated persons share kitchen, and perhaps bath and food, facilities, such as in a boarding house - the other situation applies to units in which people are cared for and includes facilities such as hospitals, convalescent hospitals, boarding schools, and prisons. The Department of Finance estimates forty seven (47) Los Banos residents living in group homes in January 1985, all at a convalescent hospital. The actual number of persons living in group homes is probably greater as the state pre-empts the city in regulating and licensing certain group quarters with five or fewer residents.



# HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS and SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSEHOLDS

A household is any group of persons, or a sole individual, living together in a residence. The people comprising the household may be related or unrelated as long as they cohabitate. A survey of household characteristics is useful in determining trends, including household size, household income, elderly households, overcrowded households, and the number of special need households, such as female-headed households, large families, and seasonal workers and farm labor households. An evaluation of household characteristics is essential to planning housing needs.

## SIZE AND NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS

The City had 3,659 households in 1980 with an average size of 2.83 persons. By 1985 estimates are that 4,073 households with an average size of 2.96 persons will make up the City's population. The cause of the increase in household size after a steady twenty (20) year decrease might be attributed to the delayed formation of young families of the now mature baby-boom generation. This trend and projections is summarized below.

TABLE F

### LOS BANOS POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLDS SIZE AND NUMBER

	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1992</u>
Population	5,272	9,188	10,341	12,102	14,030	14,883
Households	1,680	2,849	3,659	4,073	4,740	4,961
Average size of household	3.40	3.23	2.83	2.96	2.96	3.00

SOURCES: 1960, 1970, 1980 Census and Los Banos Planning Staff Estimates

## ELDERLY HOUSEHOLDS

The City's 3,659 households include 817 (22.3%) with a householder 65 years or older.\* Significantly, 219 or 26.8% of these elderly households are renters. Given this fact, the need to preserve and develop affordable rental units suitable for senior citizens is very important. In 1979, a one

hundred (100) unit senior citizen housing development was built using the FmHA 515. This single story development received a density bonus from the City through decreased parking requirements. These elderly-designed apartments are recognized as an asset to the City.

\*NOTE: Sample totals for households in Tables I, J, K. are 3,643.

TABLE G  
ELDERLY HOUSEHOLDS AS PART OF CITY TOTAL  
AND RATE OF RENTING - 1980

	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>RENTER</u>	<u>PERCENT RENTER</u>
All households	3,659	1,354	37%
Householder 65+	817 (22.3%)	219	26.8%

SOURCE: 1980 Census

FEMALE-HEADED HOUSEHOLD/FAMILIES

Female-headed families comprised 14% of all families in Los Banos in 1980. However, they accounted for 52.4% of all families living below the poverty level. 10.4% of all Los Banos families lived below the poverty level in 1980. For female-headed families the poverty rate ran 38.8%. The situation for female-headed families with children is worse with 45.6% living in poverty.

Like much of the surrounding area, female-headed families with children are a most critical poverty source in Los Banos. The status of such families have planning implications for housing, child care, recreation programs and schools, and other social services. Los Banos recognizes the need for these families to have affordable rental housing, often with three or more bedrooms.

TABLE H  
FAMILY TYPE, PRESENCE AND AGE OF CHILDREN  
AND POVERTY STATUS 1980

	<u>All Families</u>	<u>Above/Below Poverty as % of Total</u>	<u>Female Headed Families</u>	<u>Above/Below % of Total</u>
<u>Above Poverty:</u>				
With children under 18	1,354		185	
Without children under 18	<u>1,200</u>		<u>60</u>	
TOTAL	2,554	89.6%	245	61.2%
<u>Below Poverty:</u>				
With children under 18	249	8.7%	155	38.8%
Without children under 18	<u>47</u>	<u>1.7%</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0.0%</u>
TOTAL	296	10.4%	155	38.8%
	<u>=====</u>		<u>=====</u>	
TOTAL Above/Below	2,850		400	

SOURCE: 1980 Census

Female headed families with children under 18 comprise 52.4% of all families living below the poverty level and 62.3% of all families with children under 18 living below the poverty level.

#### OVERCROWDED HOUSEHOLDS

Overcrowding does not appear a serious planning problem for Los Banos with 8.0% of households defined as "overcrowded" in the 1980 Census. Renter households comprise 59.7% of overcrowded households. The U. S. Census Bureau defines overcrowding as more than one person per room, not including kitchen and bathroom. Overcrowding may be a more significant problem than statistically indicated, especially during the summer months when an influx of seasonal and farm workers arrive.

TABLE I  
OVERCROWDED HOUSEHOLDS

<u>PERSONS PER ROOM</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>RENTERS</u>
1.00 or less	3,350	1,174
1.01 - 1.50	193	102
1.51 or more	100	73

SOURCE: 1980 Census

### LARGE FAMILIES/HOUSEHOLDS

In 1980, 6.7% of Los Banos households contained six (6) or more persons. These households were 39.8% renters and the rate for larger renter households was slightly greater than for the general public at 7.2%. While these statistics are not overwhelming, coupled with 8% overcrowding, a need to maintain affordable rental stock for large families exists.

TABLE J  
NUMBER OF PERSONS IN HOUSING UNIT 1980

<u>PERSONS IN UNIT</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>RENTERS</u>
1 person	739	405
2 persons	1,167	354
3 persons	665	237
4 persons	557	170
5 persons	271	86
6 persons	244 (6.7%)	97 (7.2%)
	3,643	1,349

### HOMELESS PERSONS

Los Banos occasionally has Homeless Persons; however, there is virtually no permanent group living on the street. The Police Department, in cooperation with the Salvation Army, provides temporary lodging for destitute persons and families in local motels. Additional emergency housing and longer term support is provided by the County Social Services and local churches and service organizations.

### FARM LABOR HOUSEHOLDS

Los Banos has a sizable farm labor household population during the summer and early fall months. Just how large or what needs this group has is difficult to gauge because of its transient nature and the fact that many of these workers are undocumented aliens. Many of these workers are single men for whom the most affordable housing is a dormitory type unit. Another large group is those who are accompanied by family whose housing needs are greater in terms of location and amenities. The availability of housing for farm



laborers is also impacted by the influx of better paid packing shed workers who compete for short term housing. What often happens is that farm laborers "double up" or live in substandard or non-housing units. This make-do type of farm worker housing not only points to a need for adequate seasonal housing, it is also detrimental to the neighborhood in which this takes place.

The Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG) 1983 report "Merced County Housing Needs Determination" predicted a slight decline in the number of seasonal farm workers in Los Banos from 166 in 1982 to 158 in 1990. The report further estimates an additional need for nine (9) housing units for regular, non-seasonal farm worker households in Los Banos as this group increases from 69 in 1982 to 78 in 1990. Los Banos will fill this projected need through additional low cost housing units.

Merced County currently has three programs which are specifically directed towards farmworker housing. The FmHA 514 and 516 programs provide assistance to public or private non-profit organizations to develop farm labor housing. The State HCD Farmworker Housing Grant Fund provides matching funds to the same organizations for new construction or rehabilitation of housing. The State Office of Migrant Services operates two migrant farmworker housing centers in the County, one of which is located in the Los Banos area. The City, working with the County Environmental Health Department, will initiate a program during this Housing Element period which will work to insure that farm labor housing is in appropriately zoned areas and meets basic building, health, and safety requirements.

#### HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Household income is a crucial factor in determining the type and condition of housing in which people live. The 1980 census shows that the Los Banos median household income was \$14,582 per year, compared to \$14,665 for Merced County, and \$18,243 for the State.

TABLE K  
LOS BANOS HOUSEHOLD INCOME 1980

<u>INCOME</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>
Less than \$7,233 (Very Low Income)	947	26%
\$7,334 - \$11,732 (Low Income)	583	16%
\$11,733 - \$17,598 (Moderate Income)	619	17%
\$17,599 + (Above Moderate Income)	1,494	41%

Very Low Income = not exceeding 50% of the median income of the County.

Low Income = between 50% and 80% of the median income of the County.

Moderate Income = between 80% and 120% of the median income of the County.

Above Moderate Income = above 120% of the median income of the County.

SOURCES: 1980 U. S. Census and MCAG "Merced County Housing Determination", 1983, p. 23.

While the above table shows a high 26% of all households at a "very low" income level, the percent of those households living under the poverty level is less gloomy at 12.5%. The poverty rate for all families is 10.4% and the senior citizen household rate is 14.2%. As mentioned previously, female-headed families comprise over 50% of all families living in poverty.

TABLE L  
HOUSEHOLDS BELOW POVERTY LEVEL 1980

	<u>HOUSEHOLDS</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE</u>
Above poverty level	3,200	87.5%
Below poverty level	459	12.5%

SOURCE: U. S. Census 1980

TABLE M  
FAMILIES BELOW POVERTY LEVEL 1980

	<u>HOUSEHOLDS</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE</u>
Above poverty level	2,554	89.6%
Below poverty level	296	10.4%
SOURCE: U. S. Census 1980		

TABLE N  
HOUSEHOLDS 65+ BELOW POVERTY LEVEL

	<u>HOUSEHOLDS</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE</u>
Above poverty level	660	85.8%
Below poverty level	109	14.2%
SOURCE: U. S. Census 1980		

Employment plays an important part in determining the type of housing built, needed, and maintained in the City. Los Banos is an agriculturally based town which also has a diverse work force. The City is also a service area for the motoring public and transportation industry, being located on two state highways. The largest employment group in 1980 was in retail trade at 23.5%. Of the work force, agriculture was the next largest group with 11.4%, followed by educational services at 7.2% and construction at 7.02%. The eleven other employment groups ranged from 6.5% to 2.5% of the work force each. While Los Banos enjoys a diverse work force, wages and salaries are generally lower than many other areas as reflected in income level discussed previously.

The City also suffers a high unemployment rate like much of Merced County. The 1980 Census unemployment rate in Los Banos was 10.2%. The Employment Development Department's Annual Planning Information, Merced County 1984-85, gives a county unemployment rate in 1982 and 1983 averaging 12.6%. A similar rate is predicted for 1985. The Los Banos Branch EDD office estimates the City has the lowest unemployment rate in September and the highest rate in February, reflecting the agriculturally based economy.

The City of Los Banos employment picture may become brighter during the next five years. The City, with the help of the Merced County Economic

Development Program, is actively seeking small to medium size industry, and hopes to attract such firms from the Bay Area. In addition, a National Cemetery is projected to be built and a large reservoir and dam, as a part of the California Water Project, is being investigated for areas within ten miles of the City. Far and away the biggest impact will be felt should the proposed rocket/defense plant be built north of the nearby Santa Nella area. This plant would cost \$60-\$90 million to construct, employ 200 - 300 during the initial operation and potentially employ 1,200 - 2,000 when in full operation. All indications are that this plant will locate in the Santa Nella/Los Banos area. Certainly such economic development will have a tremendous impact on Los Banos' housing needs.

#### SPECIAL NEEDS SUMMARY

Special needs households in the City of Los Banos which appear to have the most critical needs are the elderly and female-headed families. Both groups have sizable percentages with very low incomes. Coupling this low income with a need for unique housing, such as larger living units for female-headed families or supportive and accessible environments for the elderly, sometimes makes adequate housing for those two groups difficult. Renter households, farmworker households, and disabled persons, also have special needs, however, their situation is perhaps not as critical as those of the elderly and female-headed households.

Another group with special needs, but not as critical a housing situation, is the moderate income family. Such families, even those with a two earner income, often find themselves unable to purchase homes or must purchase homes which do not meet their needs. This is due to Los Banos residents' relatively low income level averages and high unemployment.

#### HOUSING MARKET CHARACTERISTICS

Los Banos' Housing Market is similar to that of the larger Merced County Housing Market. Based on 1980 census data, the City housing stock is predominately single family at 70%. Mobile homes comprise approximately 7% of the housing stock and various other multiple family units comprise the remaining 23%. Owner occupied units comprise 63% and rental occupied units



37% of the total units. A significant percent of single family homes are rented - 23%. In 1980 22% of all units were 30 years or older. The City's median home value in 1980 was \$49,000. The median rent was \$157.00 per month and over half of all renters paid 25% or more of their gross income for rent.

#### COST OF HOUSING

The cost of owning or renting is based on numerous factors, including financing, inflation, and supply and demand which are often beyond the City's control. However, the City, along with the local Chamber of Commerce and local real estate firms, tracks the general costs of both buying and renting housing.

Sale price of homes ranged from \$45,000 to \$160,000 during 1984. The median sale price was approximately \$60,000 to \$65,000 for existing three-bedroom, two-bath, homes of 1,100 to 1,300 square feet. While these prices may seem moderate or inexpensive when compared with urban areas of California, affordable home ownership for moderate income families remains difficult.

Mobile homes provide a more affordable means of home ownership for some households. A new single-wide mobile home (14' x 60', 840 square feet) costs between \$25,000 to \$40,000, depending on amenities. Mobile home spaces rent from \$80.00 to \$160.00 per month. There are presently five (5) mobile home parks with a total of 315 spaces in the City. A 300-space, condominium, mobile home park proposal is currently being proposed.

Rents within the city vary depending upon the type, age, location, and amenities of the units. Rentals for one- and two-bedroom apartments and duplexes range from \$200 to \$375 per month. The typical two-bedroom apartment rents for \$275. Rentals of two- and three-bedroom houses range from \$300 to \$500 per month.

Despite Los Banos' relatively inexpensive housing costs compared with State averages, a significant percentage of residents are overpaying for housing (defined by the state as more than 25% of gross household income). This overpayment for housing is particularly acute with low income residents as the tables below demonstrate.

TABLE O  
NUMBER RENTER HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY GROSS RENT  
AS PERCENT OF INCOME

RENT AS % OF INCOME:	<u>0-4,999</u>	<u>5,000-9,999</u>	<u>10,000-14,999</u>	<u>15,000-19,999</u>	<u>20,000 +</u>
0 - 19 %	15	57	72	101	178
20 - 24 %	8	17	70	40	7
25 - 34 %	50	104	47	29	7
35 + %	206	195	12	0	0

SOURCE: 1980 Census

TABLE P  
NUMBER OWNER HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY SELECTED MO COSTS AS % OF INCOME

OWNER COSTS AS % OF INC:	<u>0-4,999</u>	<u>5,000-9,999</u>	<u>10,000-14,999</u>	<u>15,000-19,999</u>	<u>20,000 +</u>
0 - 19 %	11	126	166	174	768
20 - 24 %	26	38	54	35	87
25 - 34 %	19	40	39	25	38
35 + %	90	94	42	25	19

SOURCE: 1980 Census

The tables above show that a significant number of lower-income residents (0-4,999, 5-9,999, and part of 10-14,999 groups) are overpaying for housing. Using State Housing and Community Development's methodology for overpayment reveals the following statistics:

RENTER LOWER-INCOME OVER-PAYMENTS

- 893 lower-income renter households
- 604 lower-income renter households overpaying 25% or more of gross income
- 68% of lower-income renter households overpaying

OWNER LOWER-INCOME OVER-PAYMENTS

- 712 lower-income owner households
- 310 lower-income owner households overpaying 25% or more of gross income
- 44% of lower-income owner households overpaying

## HOUSING STOCK

The 1980 census showed Los Banos as having 3,931 year-round housing units, 3,643 of which were occupied. Single family detached dwellings comprised approximately 70% of the housing stock, multiple families unit 23%, and mobile homes 7% of the housing stock. Owner occupied units made up 63% and renter occupied units 37% of the Housing stock. The rental vacancy was 7.7% in 1980. The Department of Finance estimated a similar vacancy rate in January 1985. The summer rental vacancy rate, however, is probably only half the winter-season rate because of the agricultural influx.

TABLE Q

HOUSING UNITS AND TENURE OF OCCUPIED UNITS 1980

	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>		<u>OWNER</u>		<u>RENTER</u>	
			<u>OCC</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>OCCU</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>OCCU</u>	<u>%</u>
1, detached	2,734	69.5	2,586	71.0	1,999	77.3	587	22.7
1, attached	135	3.4	126	3.5	22	17.5	104	82.5
2	137	3.5	119	3.3	27	22.7	92	77.3
3 or 4	223	5.7	202	5.5	21	10.4	181	89.6
5 or more	408	10.4	356	9.8	36	10.1	320	89.9
mobile home	<u>294</u>	<u>7.5</u>	<u>254</u>	<u>7.0</u>	<u>189</u>	<u>4.4</u>	<u>65</u>	<u>25.6</u>
TOTALS	3,931		3,643		2,294	63.2	1,349	37.2

SOURCE: 1980 Census

TABLE R

VACANCY RATE 1980

Overall Vacany Rate

For Sale	47	1.2%
For Rent	107	2.7%
Held for Occasional Use	23	.6%
Other vacant	<u>108</u>	<u>2.8%</u>
TOTAL	285	7.3%

1980 Rental Vacancy Rate: 7.7% (107/1,388)

SOURCE: 1980 Census

## HOUSING CONDITION

Housing stock conditions in Los Banos are generally good due to an active abatement and code enforcement and a Community Development Block Grant Rehabilitation Program. Many of the City's older houses are also located in stable neighborhoods and are maintained by the home owners. Older housing stock can become an important source of housing for low and moderate income people as these houses "filter down" in price. Unfortunately, many "filter down" older units require substantial maintenance and repair which sometimes adds to the "affordability gap" for moderate income households.

In general, the City's housing stock is a mix of older and newer units. In 1980, approximately 22% of all units were 30 years or older. This ratio is estimated to remain in 1985. There may be a significant increase in older homes, however, when the 37% of the housing stock built in the 1960s reaches old age in the 1990s. In addition to greater maintenance costs, older homes are usually less energy efficient. Pacific Gas and Electric Company is the City's principal energy provider. Pacific Gas and Electric has various energy audits and weatherization programs which residents are referred to. The City Building Department also insures that all new or rehabilitated units meet energy standards.

TABLE S

### CITY HOUSING AGE

	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>% OF TOTAL</u>	<u>TOTAL OCC</u>	<u>RENTER OCC</u>
1979 - 1980	291	7.4%	232	76
1975 - 1978	336	8.6%	317	118
1970 - 1974	258	6.6%	232	79
1960 - 1969	1,464	37.2%	1,412	482
1950 - 1959	725	18.4%	681	282
1940 - 1949	329	8.4%	303	137
1939 or earlier	528	13.4%	466	175

Percent of units over 30 years old in 1980: 21.8%

SOURCE: 1980 Census



Housing condition and the need for rehabilitation is subjective and difficult to determine. In 1978 the Housing Assistance Plan (HAP) of a CDBG documented 378 housing units in the City in need of rehabilitation and being suitable for rehabilitation. 46 of these units were rehabilitated under the CDBG Program for low and moderate income households through 1984. In addition, approximately 40 units have been rehabilitated by the private sector. The City Building Department has also actively abated substandard housing. Six vacant units have recently received abatement notices and an additional two units per year are estimated to become uninhabitable each year. An informal staff survey, conducted in September 1985, estimates approximately 275 to 300 housing units in need of rehabilitation, ranging from painting and roofing to serious structural problems.

#### LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL CONSTRAINTS

##### LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROLS

Los Banos controls residential development through laws, regulations and actions including the zoning ordinance, subdivision ordinance, general plan, site plan, and subdivision review, conditional use permits, and environmental assessments. Many of the controls are mandated by state laws, such as the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the Subdivision Map Act, while others are discretionary actions by the City. The state and the city have adopted the laws and controls for the general good and welfare of the residents. In an attempt to ensure that these controls benefit the public the City periodically reviews and sometimes modifies Municipal Code sections. The subdivision ordinance was recently redrafted to streamline procedures and ensure consistency with State law.

Some might argue that City Code requirements, such as minimum lot size, open space and parking requirements, or site plan review of multiple family dwellings place unnecessary constraints on development of housing. The City believes that such controls and standards are necessary to ensure a good living environment for residents. In addition, the Municipal Code provides for variances, use permits and appeals in meeting unique development situations.

The process time for various land and development requirements varies depending upon the complexity of the proposal. A small and simple subdivision can be approved within forty five (45) days while a large annexation may take close to one year. These time frames are well within professional planning and development standards.

#### BUILDING PERMIT PROCESS

Los Banos and State Law requires the builder of housing, other structures, and improvements to obtain building permits and pass inspections to ensure minimum standards of construction. The City Building Department uses the Uniform Building Code (UBC) in the permit, inspection, and approval process. Building permit fees are based on the UBC and City charges for sewer, water, and parks. The average permit cost for a 1,250 foot home is approximately \$1,100, generally below costs in surrounding cities. This cost is broken down as follows:

##### BUILDING PERMIT FEES FOR A 1,250 SQUARE FOOT HOME - 1985

Construction and Inspection	\$ 581
Sewer connection	140
Water connection	279
Park Dedication	<u>100</u>
	\$ 1,100

Permit processing time is usually within five to ten (5 - 10) days and inspections are usually made the next day after receiving the contractor's request.

#### INFRASTRUCTURE

In addition to the above fees, a developer must pay for extending infrastructure, including streets, sewer and water lines. The City has adopted improvement standards and specifications for infrastructure construction to ensure health, safety, and durability. The City's Transportation and Circulation Plan should also be updated and provide a guide for major arterials into and out of expanding residential areas. Without adequate circulation, future residential and economic development could be stymied. Such infrastructure costs can sometimes be defrayed through government grants (i.e. Community

Development Block Grant) if the development benefits low and moderate income residents. The City also charges the following acreage fees for subdivision developments to "buy into" existing City Services:

SUBDIVISION ACREAGE FEES FOR CITY SERVICES

Sewer Development	\$500/acre
Water Development	\$900/acre
Storm Drain Development	\$500/acre
	<u>\$1,900/acre</u>

At an average of 4.5 single family houses per acre, these fees add about \$425 to the cost of each house.

PROPERTY TAXES

Since the passage of Proposition 13 in 1978, the taxing authority of local governments has been very limited. To offset this limited property tax revenue, cities have instituted many user fees, such as those previously discussed. The low property tax rate of 1% of assessed value results in a significantly lower tax burden on home owners. Because of the limited property tax, municipalities find annexation less attractive as revenues usually do not exceed or are less than costs.

OTHER CONSTRAINTS

In general terms, Land Use Controls which the City has control over are processing time and steps, fees, and municipal code requirements. The City's development processing time is efficient and regulation is not excessive. The City Council, Planning Commission, and staff have traditionally worked with developers to insure that adequate and affordable housing is available. While there is no organized limited-growth faction in the City, there is a general consensus that growth and development should be reasonable and well planned so as to remain an asset rather than burden to the City.

City development fees help ensure that new growth pays its fair share. These fees are reasonable and most were set in 1978. A new development fee which is being discussed is a "School Impact Fee" proposed by the School District. The City will work with the School District to determine if such a fee is necessary and what such a fee might be.



## NON-GOVERNMENTAL CONSTRAINTS

Market factors have the greatest impact on the availability and cost of housing. High interest rates for both construction and mortgage loans are a current cause of a sluggish and expansive housing market. In the recent past, high inflation of housing prices has also limited the consumer's ability to own or rent affordable housing. These financial factors are a result of private sector and federal government actions and policies and they are beyond local government control.

Even though the current home mortgage rates are the lowest in five years, many families find themselves unable to qualify for a loan due to stricter income to loan ratios and large down payments on still high housing prices. Local realtors report that most middle class families require a two earner income to purchase a first home in a middle class neighborhood. Many moderate and lower income families have found themselves priced entirely out of the market. Financial institutions, viewing the depressed rural real estate markets, are reluctant to loan developers construction loans for new housing subdivision or charge prohibitively high rates. Some federal housing programs, such as Farmers Home, Veterans Administration, and the Federal Home Administration, help mitigate these financing problems.

The price of land in Los Banos is another factor in high housing costs. While reasonably priced relative to urban areas, lot prices are increasing as supply diminishes. Although adequate land is zoned for residential development, a number of factors has reduced the number of buildable subdivision lots to approximately a one year supply for contractors not owning a subdivision. Consequently, the value of these lots has escalated during the last year at a rate much greater than inflation. Add to high lot price and expensive financing, increasing costs of building supplies and labor, and housing affordability becomes even more tenuous.

The table below gives an example of major components and costs of a new, compact three-bedroom two-bath home in one of Los Banos' newer subdivisions:

TYPICAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT COST FOR  
MIDDLE INCOME LOS BANOS HOME - 1985

Land and Improvements (65' x 100' lot)	\$ 18,000.
City Building Permit and Hook-ups	1,100.
Construction (1,250 sq ft house at \$38.00/sq ft)	47,500.
Construction financing, marketing cost and developer profit	<u>7,000.</u>
TOTAL COST TO CONSUMER	\$ 73,600.

The median income Los Banos family who now has an annual income of about \$23,000. would be hard pressed to purchase such a home using commercial mortgage structuring. (The \$23,000. median annual income is based on the 1980 Census median income of \$16,814 multiplied by the 37% salary increase a typical city employee has received between 1980 and 1985.) In fact, developers of such housing are finding an increasing share of their market is comprised of young families from the San Jose - Gilroy area who are willing to commute two to three hours daily to purchase affordable housing.

FUTURE HOUSING NEEDS

FAIR SHARE ALLOCATION OF HOUSING NEEDS

The Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG) prepared the "Merced County Housing Needs Determinations" in June, 1983. This Regional Housing Needs Plan was completed under state guidelines. The plan's purpose is to examine housing needs in a regional area and allocate a "fair share" of the projected housing need to each local government. The cities and county then have the responsibility for planning in their Housing Elements to meet those needs. These needs are not only based on total number of units but also type (single vs multiple), tenure (owner vs renter), and income groups.

The State HCD and MCAG have also sanctioned extending the future housing need for a two year period. This extension is based on a 3% increase in need and fair share allocation. Both the original projections to 1990 and the extended projections are included. The extended need has increased total units by 62.

## PROJECTED HOUSING NEEDS

MCAG has estimated the number of housing units needed to accommodate the projected 1990 households in Los Banos. The Association's formula determining the needed units takes into account a desired vacancy rate. MCAG has determined that in 1980 Los Banos needed 47 units to meet the existing housing needs. The 47 units needed not only would raise the 1980 4.1% rate of vacancy and achieve the "optimum vacancy rate", but would also bring the 1980 rate close to 1970's 7.2 vacancy rate which is viewed as an adequate supply-demand ratio. Given that the 1985 Department of Finance estimated vacancy rate is 7.2%, even with sluggish housing construction, the City questions the "existing need" for 47 units. This determination and the City's estimate of two housing units per year becoming uninhabitable should be noted when analyzing projected housing needs.

The "Merced County Housing Needs Determinations" projects the following additional housing needs for Los Banos between 1980 and 1990:

TABLE T

### PROJECTED HOUSING UNIT NEEDS 1980-1990

<u>Total Units</u>	<u>Single Family</u>	<u>Multiple Family</u>	<u>Mobile Home</u>
1,171	855 (73%)	234 (20%)	82 (7%)

TABLE U

### PROJECTED HOUSING UNIT NEED BY TENURE 1980-1990

<u>Owner Units (%)</u>	<u>Renter Units (%)</u>
723 (62%)	449 (38%)

TABLE V

### PROJECTED HOUSING UNIT NEED BY INCOME 1980-1990

<u>Very Low (%)</u>	<u>Low (%)</u>	<u>Moderate (%)</u>	<u>Above Moderate (%)</u>
277 (24%)	200 (17%)	215 (18%)	478 (41%)

SOURCES: (The MCAG projected housing needs are reflective of 1980 Census data on type of housing, tenure, and income.)



TABLE W  
POPULATION AND HOUSING UNIT PROJECTIONS

	<u>1980</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1990 (Projection)</u>
Population	10,341	12,102	14,030
Total Housing Units	3,928	4,386	5,099

SOURCE: 1980 Census, Department of Finance 1985 Estimate

A check of Los Banos Building activity reports 1980-1984 and Department of Finance estimates and 1980 Census data reveals the following additional housing units provided in Los Banos:

TABLE X  
ADDITIONAL HOUSING UNITS 1980-1984

<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>SINGLE FAMILY (%)</u>	<u>MULTIPLE FAMILY (%)</u>	<u>MOBILE HOME (%)</u>
444	305 (69.7%)	118 (26.6%)	21 (4.7%)

SOURCES: City of Los Banos Building Activity Reports 1980-84  
and Department of Finance 1985 Estimates

TABLE Y  
ADDITIONAL HOUSING UNITS BUILT 1980-1984 BY INCOME TYPE

Total units - very low to moderate	184 (44.5% of all units)
Single family homes - low to moderate	84 (27.5% of all single family)
Multiple family units - very low to low	100 (84.8% of all multi-family)

(NOTE: Based on building activity reports 1980-1984; total 423 units built; income group determined by unit sponsor, i.e., Farmers Home, Self Help, and Housing Authority; Mobile homes provided an additional 21 moderate income units.)

As seen in the above tables, building activity has averaged 85 new units per year between 1980-84. During the '81-82 recession annual building declined to 57 units, while during the past two years building has averaged

100 units per year. In addition, the City gained 21 mobile homes during this period which generally provide housing for low and moderate income households.

Subtracting the 444 units gained between 1980 and 1984 from the total 1980 to 1990 projected need of 1,171 leaves a balance of 727 housing units needed by 1990. If building activity continues at a rate of approximately 100 units per year, the City will fall short of the 1990 goal by over 200 units.

With respect to the City's "fair share" of very low, low, and moderate income housing units the last five years building activity shows the City falling behind with this need. The "filtering down" of units to lower income levels, however, is likely filling this gap in low to moderate income housing along with the construction of non-subsidized housing which is directed toward the moderate income household.

The following tables represent the City's projected housing production goals during the five year planning period:

TABLE Z

PROJECTED HOUSING UNIT NEEDS 1985-1990

<u>TOTAL UNITS</u>	<u>SINGLE FAMILY (%)</u>	<u>MULTIPLE FAMILY (%)</u>	<u>MOBILE HOME (%)</u>
727	550 (76%)	116 (16%)	61 (8%)

SOURCES: MCAG 1983 Housing Needs Determination and  
City Building Activity Reports 1980-84

TABLE A-A

PROJECTED HOUSING UNIT NEEDS BY INCOME 1985-1990

<u>VERY LOW (%)</u>	<u>LOW (%)</u>	<u>MODERATE (%)</u>	<u>ABOVE MODERATE (%)</u>
174 (24%)	124 (17%)	131 (18%)	298 (41%)

SOURCES: MCAG 1983 Housing Needs Determination and  
City Building Activity Reports 1980-84

The following tables represent the City's projected housing production goals during the seven year planning period:

TABLE B-B

PROJECTED HOUSING UNIT NEEDS 1985-1992

<u>TOTAL UNITS</u>	<u>SINGLE FAMILY (%)</u>	<u>MULTIPLE FAMILY (%)</u>	<u>MOBILE HOME (%)</u>
762	576 (76%)	122 (16%)	64 (8%)

SOURCES: MCAG 1983 Housing Needs Determination and  
City Building Activity Reports 1980-84

TABLE C-C

PROJECTED HOUSING UNIT NEEDS BY INCOME 1985-1992

<u>VERY LOW (%)</u>	<u>LOW (%)</u>	<u>MODERATE (%)</u>	<u>ABOVE MODERATE (%)</u>
183 (24%)	130 (17%)	137 (18%)	312 (41%)

SOURCES: MCAG 1983 Housing Needs Determination and  
City Building Activity Reports 1980-84

LAND INVENTORY

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Los Banos has adequate land within and contiguous to the City Limits to accommodate residential development needs during the five year planning period. This assessment is based upon a staff conducted land and site inventory completed in late September and early October 1985. Lands contained in this inventory are only those which are likely to develop within the original five year planning period.

The following land inventory matrix contains only those lands currently zoned or designated for residential development in the Land Use Element and likely to develop during the planning period:



TABLE D-D  
LAND INVENTORY OF SITES SUITABLE FOR  
RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT 1985-1990

<u>ZONING/HOUSING TYPE</u>	<u>NUMBER OF ACRES</u>	<u>DENSITY RANGE (UNITS/ACRE)</u>	<u>DWELLING UNIT CAPACITY</u>
Single Family	51	4.5 DU/acre	230 D.U.
Multiple Family and Rental	42	20 DU/acre	840 D.U.
Manufactured Housing	39	7.7 DU/acre	300 D.U.
Residential Redevelopment Potential (Old Town Infill)	5	6 DU/acre	30 D.U.
Currently Non-Residential (Proposed Annexations)	242	4.5 DU/acre	1,089 D.U.
Other Planned Development (Lakeshore Villages, Phase I)	<u>55</u>	7.6 DU/acre	<u>416 D.U.</u>
TOTAL	434 acres		2,905 D. U.

SOURCE: Los Banos Planning Staff Land Inventory September/October 1985

ANALYSIS OF RESIDENTIAL POTENTIAL 1985-90 (TABLE B-E)

The "Single Family" potential consists of lands suitable for new subdivisions and within the City Limits. Included in this count are 21 single family lots in the Racquet Club Subdivision, an additional 32 lots in the Virginia Estates Subdivision, and 20 lots in the Ranchwood Estates Subdivision, and 6 lots in Presidential Estates/southside. The total 230 single family home capacity is supplemented by an additional 209 unit capacity for Lakeshore Village PUD and "old town" infill lots, and a 1,089 unit capacity for proposed annexations.

"Multiple family and rental" potential consists of lands zoned for such housing. 5 acres of R-3 zoning in the Racquet Club Subdivision, 14 acres off Nickel Street, 11 acres adjacent to Mercey Springs Road, 3 acres in the Spadafore tract, and 9 acres in the Henry Miller/Page Park area.

"Manufactured housing" potential consists of 39 acres east of Nickel Street which are proposed to be a 300+ unit mobile home condominium park.

"Residential redevelopment potential" consists of 41 lots in the

"old town" section. Over one-half of these lots are substandard with 8 being 25-feet in width. The area is zoned R-2, Medium Density, but the area has developed as single family homes. Thirty units might be realistically developed in this area given flexible lot and design standards.

"Currently non-residential" potential consists of two proposed annexations in the southern area of the city. The housing capacity estimates of 1,089 single family units are based on projections contained in the Annexations' Environmental Impact Reports. Mixed development, including limited commercial and multiple family, may result in a higher dwelling unit capacity.

The "Other Planned Development" category consists of the first phase of the Lakeshore Villages Planned Unit Development. This development, which will contain a lake, recreation center and park, will be primarily marketed towards seniors. Family housing and a convalescent home are also planned. 179 of the 416 first phase units are single family homes.

#### SUMMARY OF RESIDENTIAL POTENTIAL MAP

The corresponding map "Residential potential" lists undeveloped areas "A" through "I" and categorizes them as very good, good, fair, poor, or very poor in potential for residential development. The primary factors in rating residential development potential are sewer availability, storm water drainage, and surrounding zoning and uses. A brief description of each area, and its plus or minuses for residential development, is given below.

AREA "A" (VERY GOOD): Sewer capacity and storm water drainage is good and readily available. Surrounding zoning and uses are compatible except western portion which is adjacent to Industrial zoned land.

AREA "B" (VERY GOOD): Sewer capacity and storm water drainage is good and readily available. Deteriorated Nickel Street sewer line may hamper development of southern portion. Surrounding zoning and use compatible except south end which is Highway Commercial Zone.

AREA "C" (VERY POOR): No sewer capacity and drainage poor as part is in Grasslands Drainage area. Existing uses as wetlands, planned manufacturing, and agricultural.

AREA "D" (FAIR): No sewer capacity now available and would require pumping. Drainage fair. Current uses highway commercial, manufacturing, and agricultural.

AREA "E" (GOOD): Limited sewer capacity adjacent but parts will require pumping. Drainage good. Current use agricultural, with residential to west and highway commercial to north. 164 acres proposed for annexation.

AREA "F" (FAIR): Limited sewer capacity adjacent but will have to be pumped across Central California Irrigation District Canal. Must have drainage rights into canal. Current use agricultural with residential to north and east. 78 acres proposed for annexation.

AREA "G" (VERY POOR): No sewer capacity and poor drainage particularly in western portion. Current use agricultural with Highway Commercial and Residential zoning. Area in airport approach.

AREA "H" (POOR): Some sewer capacity adjacent but will require pumping. Drainage poor. Current use agricultural with eastern section zoned Industrial. Area in airport approach.

AREA "I" (FAIR): Sewer capacity adjacent but would require pumping. Drainage available. Current use agricultural with residential to east and south.

The above areas of potential residential growth have also been addressed in a different but related manner in the Los Banos Storm Drainage Study and Master Plan, November, 1981, prepared by George S. Nolte and Associates, Civil Engineers.

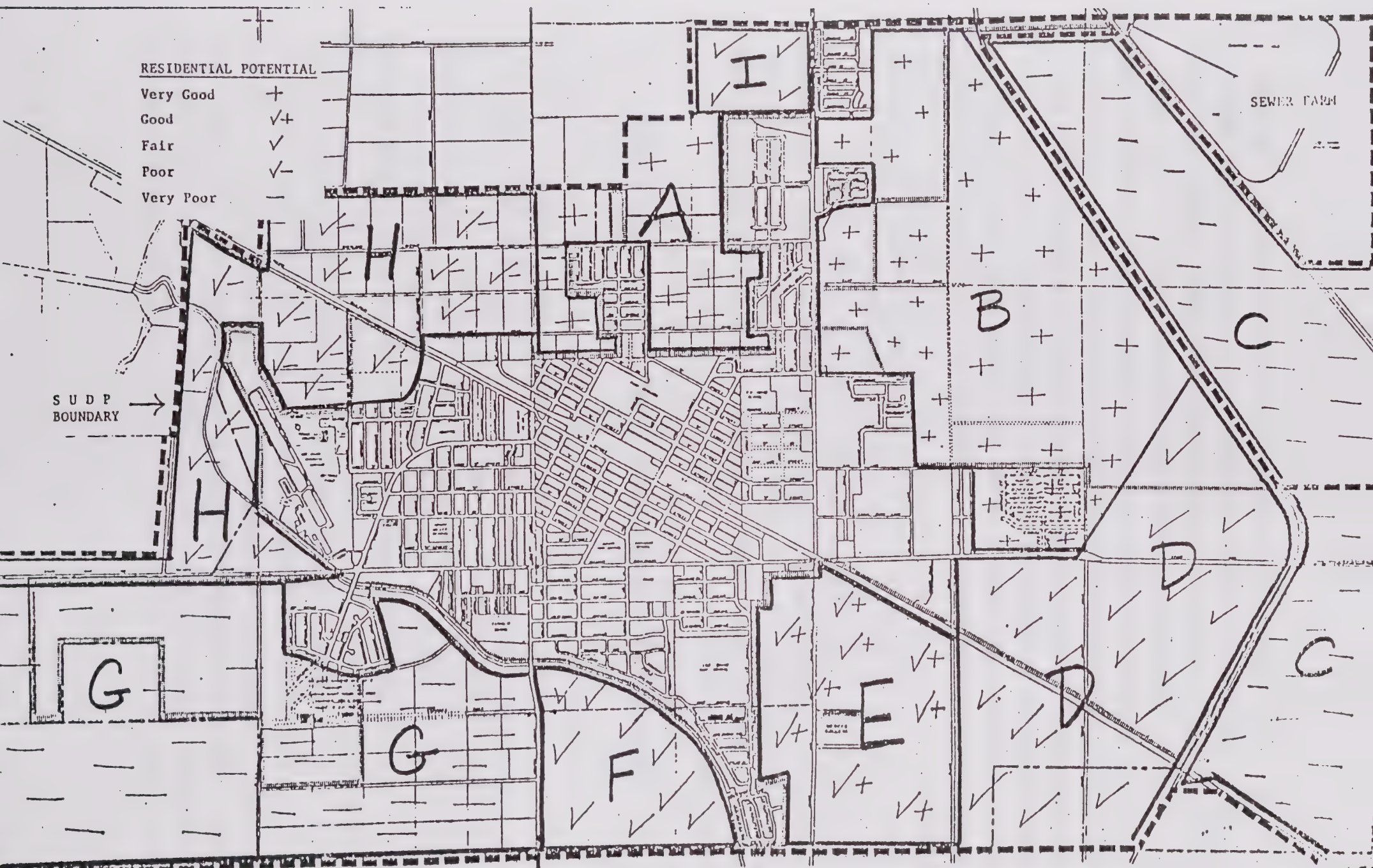
The Storm Drainage Master Plan area is contained within this element's residential potential map boundaries. The Master Plan says of potential growth:

"For the purposes of population holding capacity, the 2,420 acres of potential new residential land within the master plan boundaries could accommodate about 14,670 new dwelling units and 40,800 people. When infill is included, the master planning area could accommodate an additional 44,940 people.



RESIDENTIAL POTENTIAL

Very Good	+
Good	√+
Fair	√
Poor	√-
Very Poor	-



As previously discussed, at a 4% annual growth rate, the population of the City would increase about 18,329 by Year 2006.

At a steady 4% annual growth rate, the City's population would not increase by 44,940 until the Year 2023."

This large housing capacity of undeveloped land adjacent to Los Banos will only be developed if a number of factors also fall into place. Among these factors are employment opportunities, shopping and services, public safety and health services, educational capacity, an adequate transportation network, and adequate sewage treatment capacity and collection system. All require infusions of funds from either public and/or private sources.

One factor in potential residential development which warrants special mention is sewer treatment capacity. Los Banos is fortunate to have a sewage treatment plant with a capacity to process a population of 25,000. This capacity is more than adequate to handle projected residential growth into the next century. The sewer line capacity to deliver effluent to the treatment plant is, unfortunately, inadequate in several areas to accommodate this growth.

#### PERFORMANCE OF THE 1978 HOUSING ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

The City of Los Banos' performance in achieving the 1978 Housing Element's objectives is impressive, with most recommendations accomplished and other related measures taken to enhance housing. This analysis of the 1978 Element's implementation is presented in two ways. First is this brief narrative summary highlighting accomplishments. Second is an outline which lists the Element's recommendations and the City's performance.

There are four major areas of the 1978 Housing Element Implementation program:

- Housing Rehabilitation and Neighborhood Preservation
- Land Use Controls
- Public Services and Facilities
- Public Housing Programs



In the area of "Housing Rehabilitation and Neighborhood Preservation", the City developed three programs using three Community Development Block Grants. The first program rehabilitated 28 homes in the City's target area of "old town", which also has the highest concentration of low income and minority households, and substandard housing. The second program consisted of Public Works improvements in the target area and downtown apartment area such as sidewalk installation and deteriorating water line replacement. The third program rehabilitated 18 abandoned downtown hotel units into apartments. This was accomplished through low interest loans averaging \$15,000 per unit. In addition, the City used its own funds to improve streets in the Canal Farm, Jeffrey, and San Luis area which contain moderate income homes and apartments.

The City adopted a number of measures affecting "land use controls" in an effort to increase efficiency and housing. Among these actions were development of planned development, optional design, and density bonus ordinances, adoption of a policy allowing residential use of upper floors in the downtown area, and the granting of lot width and size variances in the "old town" section which contains many substandard lots. The subdivision ordinance was revised to make it more efficient, reduce costs, and conform with state law. Annexations were permitted where housing could be easily serviced and the City discouraged development of housing around the airport environs.

"Public Services and Facilities" have also been addressed during the implementation period. The sewer treatment plant has been expanded under an EDA Grant and can now handle a population of 25,000. A thirty-inch sewer outfall line was also constructed through EDA, opening up a large area in the northern city to development. Sewer lines were repaired in the downtown area using CDBG funds. A sewer and sewer treatment master plan was prepared, and a sewer development fee enacted. Storm water drainage capacity was increased under an agreement with the Grasslands Water District, and a Storm Drainage Master Plan was prepared. The water system has also been improved with the addition of two wells using CDBG and EDA funds, the replacement of old cast iron pipe lines, and the installation of new "looping" water lines in four residential areas to improve fire protection. The City Street system was also financed through CDBG, FAU, and City funding. CDBG funds were used to extend



"D" Street and open up and infill the Spadafore Subdivision. The other streets in this abandoned subdivision were improved with FmHA funds in connection with Self-Help home building and the MacArthur Apartments Senior Housing Project.

"Public Housing Programs" have also accomplished much during the implementation period. 213 single family homes and 208 multi-family units were built under FmHA or Self Help projects. The Merced County Housing Authority developed ten scattered units and 32 privately developed new "condo" apartments were qualified for Section 8.

In addition, the 18 downtown apartments for lower income people were developed with CDBG funds. In total, over 50% of the housing units developed over the last seven years have been developed under Public Housing Programs.

The outline summary of these Housing achievements follows:

#### PERFORMANCE OF THE HOUSING ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

##### SUMMARY

#### I HOUSING REHABILITATION AND NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION

##### A. Housing Rehabilitation

Housing Element Recommendations:

1. 25-30 units in concentrated area

Performance:

1. 28 units rehabilitated using CDBG funds - \$335,000 to date including administration - \$30,000.00 remaining
2. 18 units of "old" abandoned hotel units in downtown under CDBG Program - \$250,000 leveraged

##### B. Neighborhood Preservation

Housing Element Recommendations:

1. "D" Street extension utilizing CDBG funds and City funds to open up abandoned Spadafore Subdivision

Performance:

1. "D" Street completed. 118 housing units for senior citizens and low-moderate income built.
2. Installation of sidewalks and replacement of water lines with CDBG funds - \$160,000.00 - in target housing rehab area
3. Canal Farm Lane - Jeffrey Road - San Luis Street - street improvements - \$200,000.00 - City funds

##### C. Building, Housing, and Energy Codes

Housing Element Recommendations:

1. Use CDBG funded rehab project for lower income housing quality

Performance:

1. 28 units rehabilitated, meet minimum housing Code, CDBG funds
2. Building inspection of rental housing to meet minimum housing standard upon change of City service instituted

## II LAND USE CONTROLS

### A. Zoning

#### Housing Element Recommendations:

1. Zone change of over-zoned commercial districts to residential
2. Lot size waivers to maximize existing public facilities and increase housing sites - "old" township
3. Streamlining permit process

#### Performance:

1. Rezoning of C-N zoning along West "I" Street to R-3, C-2 to R-3 along "H" Street, C-2 to R-2 along "G" Street, and H-C to R-3-T east off Pacheco
2. Lot sizes have been reduced effecting 70 lots and providing 15 additional lots in "old town" for Farm Home and Self-Help homes
3. Allow apartments in downtown above first floor - 18 units

### B. Subdivisions

#### Housing Element Recommendations:

1. Streamline minor subdivision and lot line adjustment process
2. Evaluate lot design and street design criteria for cost saving alternatives - standard/specs - optional design
3. Develop a contemporary planned development ordinance

#### Performance:

1. A waiver for parcel maps and provisions for lot line adjustments
2. New Subdivision Ordinance streamlining procedures and allowing lot and street design alternatives
3. New Planned Development and Optional Design Ordinances adopted

### C. Annexations

#### Housing Element Recommendations:

1. Annex land easier to develop although abundant vacant land within City

#### Performance:

1. Over 25 acres annexed for housing

### D. Airport Controls

#### Housing Element Recommendations:

1. Maintain clear zone and approach zone
2. Discourage public improvements near airport

#### Performance:

1. City has not provided public improvements which will encourage residential development near airport zone
2. City has adopted an Airport Zoning and Height Ordinance

## III PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES

### A. Sewer

#### Housing Element Recommendations:

1. Continue with sewer plant expansion
2. Prepare Master Sewer Plan
3. Improve system to allow housing development

#### Performance:

1. Sewer plant expanded (EDA) with 25,000 population capacity
2. Sewer and Sewage Treatment Master Plans prepared

3. Upgrade sewer lines in downtown for downtown hotel units,  
CDBG funds - \$90,000.00
  4. 30" sewer outfall line in north-east sector
  5. Subdivision capital development fee enacted
- B. Drainage
- Housing Element Recommendations:
1. Capital improvement fee and improvements
  2. Master Plan
- Performance:
1. Capital development fee enacted
  2. Increased drainage potential with agreement with  
Grassland's Water District
  3. Storm Drainage Master Plan prepared
- C. Water
- Housing Element Recommendations:
1. New water well
  2. Looping of water lines for fire protection
  3. Increase availability of services
- Performance:
1. Two new wells installed - one using CDBG monies and one  
using EDA funds
  2. Water lines have been looped with EDA funds in four critical  
areas - Los Banos Gardens, Seventh Street, Willmott, and  
Fairgrounds
  3. City crews' reconstruction of 21,000-feet of deteriorating  
cast iron to transite pipe - CDBG monies used in target area
  4. Upgraded service/fire protection with installation of  
stand-by generators
- D. Streets (Also see Neighborhood Preservation)
- Housing Element Recommendations:
1. "D" Street from Tenth Street to Mercey Springs Road
  2. Spadafore Subdivision
- Performance:
1. "D" Street completed - CDBG and City Funds
  2. Spadafore streets improved with FmHA monies
  3. Canal Farm, San Luis, and Jeffrey Road streets improved -  
City funds
- E. Community Services
- Housing Element Recommendations:
1. "Miller and Lux" Building improvement - EDA funds
  2. Mini-bus for Senior Citizen transportation
  3. Parks
- Performance:
1. "Miller and Lux" Building improvement commenced with  
State Parks funds
  2. Mini-bus system
  3. Encouraged larger Community Center at Senior Citizen  
MacArthur Apartments through parking reduction



#### IV PUBLIC HOUSING PROGRAMS

##### A. Section 8, Low Income Rental Subsidies

###### Housing Element Recommendations:

1. City encourage utilization of program

###### Performance:

1. City sought Section 8 for downtown hotel units - 30-36 units - turned down
2. 32 condos approved Section 8

##### B. Farmers Home Administration - FmHA

###### Housing Element Recommendations:

1. FmHA 502 - New Ownership
2. FmHA 504 - Rehabilitation
3. FmHA 515 - Rental

###### Performance:

1. FmHA 502 - 213 units completed
2. FmHA 504 - None
3. FmHA 515 - 208 units completed
4. 10 units Public Housing Authority constructed
5. Old Hotel Units - 18 apartments
6. Over 50% of all housing developed in last seven years were under Public Housing Programs

#### GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS

The Housing Element's goals, objectives, policies, and programs are the result of a series of meetings among the Citizens Advisory Committee, the Planning Commission, and Staff during the fall of 1985. The overall Housing Element objectives were adapted from the State Guidelines' three areas - construction, rehabilitation, and conservation. The quantified objective of housing construction during the original five-year planning period is the identified need and is based on an analysis of the previous five years' performance. These objectives represent the maximum housing unit construction possible during the five year planning period.

The quantified objective for the extended planning period 1985-1992 is based on the State and MCAG approved increase of 3% of the original 1985-1990 objectives. The extended planning period's quantified objectives for housing rehabilitation and conservation are also based on the original objectives.

The reason for maintaining the original five year planning period quantified objectives is to allow the City in updating the Housing Element in 1992 to use 1990 Census data to measure achievements.

After establishing City's housing goals and overall objectives, the group then identified housing "issues" relating to each goal. Policies, and in some cases programs, were adopted and address the various housing issues. While not all inclusive, the issues are reflective of the Advisory Committee's and Planning Commission's analysis of the most critical housing problems facing the City over the next five years. This Element's programs are actions which the City can undertake and achieve. Each program has a responsible party and measurable objectives by which the City's progress may be tracked. In addition, programs are presented in a matrix format.

## GOALS

The Los Banos 1985 Housing Element Goals are:

1. To promote and insure the provision of adequate housing for all persons regardless of income, age, race, or ethnic background.
2. To promote and insure the provision of housing selection by location, type, price, and tenure.
3. To promote and insure open and free choice of housing for all.
4. To promote efficient use of land available for housing.
5. To conserve and maintain the housing stock.
6. To provide for the development of a balanced residential environment with access to employment opportunities, community facility, and adequate services.

TABLE E-E

### QUANTIFIED OBJECTIVES 1985-1990

#### CONSTRUCTION:

#### HOUSING UNIT OBJECTIVE 1985-1990

<u>TOTAL UNITS</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>SINGLE FAMILY</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>MULTIPLE FAMILY</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>MOBILE HOME</u>	<u>(%)</u>
727	(100%)	550	(76%)	116	(16%)	61	(8%)

#### HOUSING UNIT OBJECTIVE BY INCOME 1985-1990

<u>VERY LOW</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>LOW</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>MODERATE</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>ABOVE MODERATE</u>	<u>(%)</u>
174	(24%)	124	(17%)	131	(18%)	298	(41%)

REHABILITATION:

HOUSING UNIT REHABILITATION OBJECTIVE 1985-1990

Private Sector : 25 units

Public Sector : 50 units

TOTAL 75 units

CONSERVATION:

HOUSING UNIT CONSERVATION OBJECTIVE 1985-1990

Number of housing units in Non-Residential  
Districts (est): 200 units

Number of such housing units lost: (15) units

Total housing units in Non-Residential  
Districts conserved 1985-1990: 185 units

TABLE F-F

QUANTIFIED OBJECTIVES 1985-1992

CONSTRUCTION:

HOUSING UNIT OBJECTIVE 1985-1992

<u>TOTAL UNITS</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>SINGLE FAMILY</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>MULTIPLE FAMILY</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>MOBILE HOME</u>	<u>(%)</u>
762	(100%)	576	(76%)	122	(16%)	64	(8%)

HOUSING UNIT OBJECTIVE BY INCOME 1985-1992

<u>VERY LOW</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>LOW</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>MODERATE</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>ABOVE MODERATE</u>	<u>(%)</u>
183	(24%)	130	(17%)	137	(18%)	312	(41%)

REHABILITATION:

HOUSING UNIT REHABILITATION OBJECTIVE 1985-1992

Private Sector : 35 units

Public Sector : 50 units

TOTAL 85 units

CONSERVATION:

HOUSING UNIT CONSERVATION OBJECTIVE 1985-1992

Number of housing units in Non-Residential  
Districts (est): 200 units

Number of such housing units lost: (21) units

Total housing units in Non-Residential  
Districts conserved 1985-1990: 179 units



The City of Los Banos hopes to achieve the above quantified housing objectives over the five-year planning period. A brief explanation of how these objectives were determined follows:

The construction objective reflects to projected housing need previously established. Should housing unit construction continue at a rate of 100 units per year, the City will experience a shortfall of 227 units by 1990, but would only have a shortfall of 62 by 1992. If this shortfall occurs household size would have to increase to four persons per dwelling unit or the projected population growth during this period would be significantly less. The construction objective as related to income groups also reflects the projected need. As mentioned previously, construction of very low, low, and moderate income housing has not kept pace with the "fair share" proportions. The "filtering down" of housing to these income groups may be necessary to fill this gap.

The rehabilitation objective is an estimate based on both private sector and public sector activity. Private sector housing rehabilitation generates approximately five units annually or 35 units during the seven-year planning period. Public sector programs to rehabilitate units exist, however, their implementation during the planning period is questionable. The City recently completed a CDBG Housing Rehabilitation Program in the "old town" section. This program rehabilitated approximately 25% of the eligible units in the target area (low income homeowners). Should the City and County implement a housing rehabilitation program during the planning period, we would hope for a target area with at least 200 eligible units and a 25% participation rate (50 units rehabilitated).

The conservation objective is based on Staff estimates of housing units currently in non-residential district, the estimated annual loss of these units to commercial activity, and the City's desire to keep this housing loss at a relatively low rate.

#### POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

To meet the Housing Element's quantified objectives, policies and programs relating to housing goals and issues must be formulated and implemented. The policies and programs are presented in a format which relates

them to specific goals and issues as identified by the Citizens Advisory Committee and Planning Commission, and where appropriate a responsible party and measurable objective for each program is included. In total, these achievable policies and programs should allow the City to meet the quantified objectives.

GOAL 1: To promote and insure the provision of adequate housing for all persons regardless of income, age, race, or ethnic background.

ISSUE 1.1: Housing Information

POLICY 1.1.1: Make information on Housing, Housing Programs, and Housing Assistance on both home ownership and rentals available to all members of the community.

PROGRAM 1.1.1.1: Establish City housing referral and information program.

Responsible Party: Planning Department

Program Objective: Develop "Housing Information and Referral Brochure". Will contain referral and information on both owning and renting, public and private sources and housing assistance agencies. Distributed to Citizens through City Staff.

Target Date: 6/87

ISSUE 1.2: City Lending Program

POLICY 1.2.1: Explore participation in various federal and state housing bond and loan programs.

POLICY 1.2.2: Encourage programs which allow local moderate income families to purchase homes.

ISSUE 1.3: Overcrowding

POLICY 1.3.1: Seek methods to alleviate overcrowding.

POLICY 1.3.2: Encourage some three or more bedroom apartments in new developments.

PROGRAM 1.3.2.1: City and county will systematically enforce building, fire, health and safety codes.

Responsible Parties: Building Department, Fire Department, County Health Department

Program Objective: 25% reduction in overcrowding in 1990 Census to 6% of all households

Target Date: On-going

GOAL 2: To promote and insure the provision of housing selection by location, type, price, and tenure.

ISSUE 2.1: Affordability - Home ownership

POLICY 2.1.1: Maintain efficient permit processing and equitable fees.

PROGRAM 2.1.1.1: Examine and adjust development and building fees on periodic basis

Responsible Parties: Planning, Building, Public Works

Program Objective: Staff Report to Council comparing development fees with surrounding jurisdictions and recommending increases or decrease based on City costs and parity.

Target Dates: 1/87 and 1/89

POLICY 2.1.2: Encourage participation in various federal and state housing programs, such as Farm Home, Self-Help, CDBG, where such programs are found appropriate.

ISSUE 2.2: Seasonal Workers

POLICY 2.2.1: Work with appropriate agencies to develop adequate seasonal and farm worker housing

PROGRAM 2.2.1.1: Develop systematic inspection program of seasonal worker housing

Responsible Party: Building Department



Program Objective: Reduction of 50% of identified substandard conditions to insure Health and Safety and prevent overcrowding.

Target Date: On-going

ISSUE 2.3: Home - Apartment Ratio; Own - Rent Ratio.

POLICY 2.3.1: Maintain adequate ratio of homes to apartments to allow choice in type of accommodation.

POLICY 2.3.2: Seek to increase home ownership

POLICY 2.3.3: Provide for Mobile Home Parks as method of home ownership

POLICY 2.3.4: Require subsidized apartment development to show need (market analysis), demonstrate design and livability features, and address impact of development on community services

ISSUE 2.4: Group Homes

POLICY 2.4.1: Work with group home providers to insure compatibility of development with neighborhood and quality of housing

POLICY 2.4.2: Enforce Code requirements (Fire, Building) for group homes to insure adequate living conditions

POLICY 2.4.3: Allow Optional Design of senior living projects to allow for group or quasi-group living environments.

ISSUE 2.5: Senior Citizens

POLICY 2.5.1: Encourage provision of senior housing for various economic strata in an effort to maintain an age and socio-economic balance within the City

POLICY 2.5.2: Encourage seniors and seniors' organizations to develop guidelines on the design and location of senior housing.

ISSUE 2.6: Handicapped/Disabled

POLICY 2.6.1: Seed adequate provision of housing for the handicapped and disabled through enforcement of Federal and State current law, building codes, and guidelines

POLICY 2.6.2: Work with providers of group homes for handicapped/ disabled persons to insure project compatibility with neighborhood, quality of housing, and availability of services.

GOAL 3: To promote and insure open and free choice of housing for all

ISSUE 3.1: Fair Housing

POLICY 3.1.1: Promptly refer complaints of housing discrimination to the appropriate county, state, or federal agency and assist such agencies as requested.

GOAL 4: To promote efficient use of land available for housing

ISSUE 4.1: Annexation

POLICY 4.1.1: Annex only those areas easily serviced and within the Specific Urban Development Plan Boundary (SUDP)

POLICY 4.1.2: Do not annex property until Specific Development Plan is submitted and reviewed

POLICY 4.1.3: Developer shall bear costs for public services improvements to annex property; however, the City may seek Grant Funding for services to annex area if project provides community-wide benefits

PROGRAM 4.1.0.1: Develop written annexation guidelines and policies

Responsible Party: Planning Department

Program Objective: Development of information sheet summarizing City policies and steps involved in annexation for dissemination to developers

Target Date: 6/87

ISSUE 4.2: Infill

POLICY 4.2.1: Encourage infill housing in residential districts where services are available

PROGRAM 4.2.1.1: Develop optional design standards and policies for housing on existing substandard lots

Responsible Party: Planning Department

Program Objective: Written standards and guidelines  
for infilling on substandard lots  
in "old town" residential district  
leading to the development of addi-  
tional ten affordable housing units

Target Date: 1/87 for standards and guidelines  
12/90 for housing units

ISSUE 4.3: Zoning

POLICY 4.3.1: Maintain integrity of residential districts through  
discouraging or mitigating incompatible use in or  
adjacent to residential districts.

POLICY 4.3.2: Require a specific plan for rezoning to multiple  
family with development occurring within a specific  
time frame

GOAL 5: To conserve and maintain the housing stock

ISSUE 5.1: Housing Rehabilitation

POLICY 5.1.1: Continue to participate in programs designed to  
conserve existing housing

PROGRAM 5.1.1.1: Inspection of rental units upon change in city  
service

Responsible Party: Building Department

Program Objective: Insure rental units meet Building  
and Health and Safety needs; 100%  
of inspected units meet or are  
are brought up to standard

Target Date: on-going

ISSUE 5.2: Maintenance of residential neighborhoods

POLICY 5.2.1: Continue enforcement of weed and other nuisance abate-  
ment programs

POLICY 5.2.2: Continue upgrading residential streets to full City  
standards through various funding sources, including  
Grants, F. A. O., and Assessment Districts



GOAL 6: To provide for the development of a balanced residential environment with access to employment opportunities, community facility, and adequate services.

ISSUE 6.1: Schools

POLICY 6.1.1: Attempt to mitigate school needs brought about by increased housing.

PROGRAM 6.1.1.1: City and School District will develop mutual policy on housing relative to school impacts, with school district taking lead role.

Responsible Parties: School District, City

Program Objective: Establish policy regarding school impaction fees

Target Date: 6/87

ISSUE 6.2: Housing/Jobs Ratio

POLICY 6.2.1: Encourage businesses and industries to locate or expand which create the most jobs and best wages relative to its demand for services (i.e. sewer)

POLICY 6.2.2. Maintain adequate housing stock to accommodate increased work force

ISSUE 6.3: Parks and Community Services

POLICY 6.3.1: Promote adequate and accessible park and community services for various residential areas through use of park dedication fees or dedications by developers.

LOS BANOS 1985 HOUSING ELEMENT PROGRAM SUMMARY

<u>PROGRAM</u>	<u>RESPONSIBLE PARTY</u>	<u>OBJECTIVE</u>	<u>TARGET DATE</u>
Housing Referral and Information Program (1.1.1.1)	Planning Department	Housing Information and Referral Brochure	6/87
Code Enforcement (1.3.2.1)	Building Department Fire Department County Health Department	25% reduction in overcrowding by 1990	on-going
Development Fees (2.1.1.1)	Planning Department Building Department Public Works Department	Periodic Analysis of Development fees	1/87, 1/89
Inspection of Seasonal worker housing (2.2.1.1)	Building Department	Reduction of substandard conditions, reduce overcrowding	on-going
Annexation Guidelines and Policies (4.1.0.1)	Planning Department	Information sheet summarizing policies and steps in annexation	on-going
Optional Design Standards for substandard lots (4.2.1.1)	Planning Department	"Old Town" infill, 10 additional units	6/87
Rental Unit Inspection upon change in City service (5.1.1.1)	Building Department	Insure rental units meet building, health, and safety standards	on-going
School Impact Fees (6.1.1.1)	School District City	Establish policy regarding school impaction fees	6/87

ADDENDUM TO HOUSING ELEMENT 1985 - 1992

During the Draft Housing Element review period, the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) submitted comments in a letter dated March 6, 1986. While generally accepting the Draft Housing Element, HCD suggested revision and additions to the Los Banos Housing Element to bring it fully into compliance with State Housing Element requirements.

While HCD's recommendations are advisory, the Department's certification of the Element as complying with State Housing Element Law is important should the City wish to participate in the Community Development Block Grant Program. Staff generally agrees with the revisions suggested by the HCD. This is particularly true with regard to the housing need estimates through 1992. The discrepancy between the Draft Element's and HCD's estimate of need developed when the planning period was extended two years to 1985-1992. Please keep in mind that the housing objectives need not be reached to be in compliance; however, they are goals to which the City should strive.

The remainder of this Addendum consists of HCD comments on the Draft Housing Element, HCD's estimates of housing needs, and the City's response to HCD's comments. These items are listed in detail below:

1. HCD letter to City Manager, dated March 6, 1986,  
"RE: Review of the City of Los Banos' Draft Housing  
Element"
2. HCD appendix to letter of March 6, 1986, listing  
suggested changes
3. HCD letter to MCAG dated November 19, 1985  
RE: Housing Needs Projects for Merced County  
1985-1992
4. City of Los Banos' response to HCD's suggested changes  
to the Los Banos Draft Housing Element



## DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Division of Housing Policy  
Development  
1 Tenth Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
(916) 323-3176



March 6, 1986

Mr. Loris Broddrick  
City Manager  
City of Los Banos  
P.O. Box 31  
Los Banos, CA 93635

Dear Mr. Broddrick:

RE: Review of the City of Los Banos' Draft Housing Element

Thank you for submitting Los Banos' draft housing element, received February 20, 1986. As you know, we are required to review draft housing elements and report our findings to the locality (Government Code Section 65588(b)).

A February 24 telephone conversation with Stephen Hollister of your staff has facilitated our review. This letter and appendix summarize the conclusions of that conversation.

Los Banos' draft housing element is a well-organized planning document that includes most of the statutorily-required analyses. The element identifies the City's existing need and resources, and establishes quantified construction, rehabilitation, and conservation objectives for the planning period. The element also includes an excellent review of previous element objectives and program accomplishments.

In our opinion, however, the element needs certain revisions to comply with State housing element law (Article 10.6 of the Government Code). The appendix to this letter summarizes the specific changes which, in our opinion, would bring Los Banos' housing element into conformity with State law.

We note that the element generally satisfies housing element law requirements with regard to housing programs. In our opinion, however, the City does not appear to be taking an active stance to promote the development of affordable housing through regulatory concessions or incentives, nor is the City pursuing available state resources such as the Small Cities CDBG program to assist in the development of affordable housing. We have sent, under separate cover, a description of available State programs for which the City might be eligible.

Mr. Loris Broddrick  
Page Two

We hope our comments are helpful to the City and we wish you success in the implementation of your housing program. We appreciate the time and effort of Mr. Hollister during our review. In accordance with requests pursuant to the Public Information Act, we are forwarding copies of this letter to the persons and organizations listed below. If you have any questions about our comments or would like assistance in the implementation of your housing program, please contact Camilla Cleary of our staff at (916) 324-8659.

Sincerely,



Nancy J. McKee, Chief  
Division of Housing Policy  
Development

NJM:CC:bt

cc: Carolyn Clar, Merced County Association of Governments  
✓Culley E. Polehn, Los Banos Planning Department  
Manuel M. Medeiros, State Department of Justice  
Bob Cervantes, Governor's Office of Planning and Research  
Tom Bannon, California Building Industry Association

## APPENDIX

### City of Los Banos

The following changes would, in our opinion, bring Los Banos' draft housing element into compliance with Article 10.6 of the Government Code. Following each recommended change we cite the supporting section of the Government Code. Where particular program examples or data sources are listed, these are suggestions for your information only. We recognize that Los Banos may choose other means of complying with the law.

#### A. Housing Needs, Resources, and Constraints

1. Quantify the City's projected housing need for all income levels including Los Banos' share of the regional housing need (Section 65583(a)(1)). There appears to be a discrepancy between new household formations (Table F) and new construction need (Table B-B). To avoid this discrepancy the City might wish to use the projected new construction need in our November 1985 letter to Ms. Carolyn Clark of the Merced County Association of Governments. A copy of this letter has been sent under separate cover.
2. Analyze required on- and off-site improvements as potential or actual governmental constraints to the improvement, maintenance, or development of housing for all income levels (Section 65583(a)(4)).
3. Analyze the special housing needs of large families (i.e., those with 5 or more persons)(Section 65583(a)(6)). We suggest an examination of owner/renter differences to target the need group where possible.

#### B. Housing Programs

1. Identify adequate sites made available to accommodate the City's share of the regional housing need for all income levels, including sites suitable for rental housing development (Section 65583(c)(1)). Table D-D "Land Inventory" demonstrates adequate capacity to accommodate regional need by income level. However, the table should indicate those sites currently served by sewer/water and other City services and facilities, or likely to be served within the planning period of the element.
2. Include program actions, pursuant to Item A-2 above, to address, and where legally possible remove, governmental constraints to the maintenance, improvement, and development of housing (Section 65583(c)(3)). For example, the City might wish to reduce lot coverage or parking requirements to promote affordable housing development.
3. Include a program which promotes equal housing opportunities (Section 65583(a)(5)). For example, Los Banos may wish to designate and publicize an agency to provide information on fair housing laws and refer complaints of housing discrimination to appropriate state or federal agencies.



LOS BANOS RESPONSE TO HCD COMMENTS ON DRAFT HOUSING ELEMENT

The following responses to HCD's suggested changes to Los Banos' Draft Housing Element should be considered a part of the Housing Element. The responses are listed with reference number used in the companion HCD "appendix". Draft Housing Element page numbers are listed in parentheses for reference.

HOUSING NEEDS, RESOURCES, AND CONSTRAINTS

A.1 (pp 29 & 41) The City accepts the Housing need projections for 1985-1992 supplied to the Merced County Association of Governments by the State Housing and Community Development (HCD) in their letter of November of November 19, 1985. Thus, tables B-B, C-C, and F-F are changed as follows:

TABLE B-BPROJECTED HOUSING UNIT NEEDS 1985-1992

<u>TOTAL UNITS</u>	<u>SINGLE FAMILY (%)</u>	<u>MULTIPLE FAMILY (%)</u>	<u>MOBILE HOME (%)</u>
833	633 (76%)	133 (16%)	67 (8%)

SOURCES: MCAG 1983 Housing Needs Determination and  
City Building Activity Reports 1980-84

State HCD Projected Regional Housing Need 1985-92, Table HCD-2

TABLE C-CPROJECTED HOUSING UNIT NEEDS BY INCOME 1985-1992

<u>VERY LOW (%)</u>	<u>LOW (%)</u>	<u>MODERATE (%)</u>	<u>ABOVE MODERATE (%)</u>
200 (24%)	150 (18%)	150 (18%)	333 (40%)

SOURCES: MCAG 1983 Housing Needs Determination and  
City Building Activity Reports 1980-84

State HCD Projected Regional Housing Need by income  
category 1985-1992, Table HCD-3

TABLE F-FQUANTIFIED OBJECTIVES 1985-1992CONSTRUCTION:HOUSING UNIT OBJECTIVE 1985-1992

<u>TOTAL UNITS (%)</u>	<u>SINGLE FAMILY (%)</u>	<u>MULTIPLE FAMILY (%)</u>	<u>MOBILE HOME (%)</u>
833 (100%)	633 (76%)	133 (16%)	67 (8%)

HOUSING UNIT OBJECTIVE BY INCOME 1985-1992

<u>VERY LOW (%)</u>	<u>LOW (%)</u>	<u>MODERATE (%)</u>	<u>ABOVE MODERATE (%)</u>
200 (24%)	150 (18%)	150 (18%)	333 (40%)

# CITY OF LOS BANOS

## RESPONSES TO HCD'S SUGGESTED CHANGES TO DRAFT HOUSING ELEMENT

Page 2

A.2.(p.21) The City's required on and off-site improvement requirements were enacted to ensure quality housing for all residents, regardless of income level. These site improvements have not been an obstacle to the building of low and moderate income housing. This is evidenced by 44.5% of all housing units constructed being subsidized through government programs and private housing for low and fixed income households.

In addition, the City has provisions to grant variances for parking, density bonuses, and Deferred Improvement Agreements for subsidized housing. A good example of this is the reduction of parking requirements by two-thirds for apartments serving low and moderate income elderly.

A.3.(p.12) With respect to large families, Los Banos used a criteria of six or more members as constituting "Large Families/Households". This was estimated at approximately 7% of both single family and apartment households. The State considers large families as those with five or more members per unit. This doubles the proportion of large families and households to 14% for both single and multi-family units.

As HCD suggests, however, the problem of overcrowding among large family renters, particularly apartment dwellers, is a special need. Renter households comprise about 60% of the overcrowded households. One half of renter households live in apartments. The majority of apartments are two bedroom and four rooms total. Under such conditions, it is probable that as many as 88 large families live in overcrowded apartments. The City recognizes the need for large apartments in The Housing Element. Policy 1.3.2 is "encourage some three or more bedroom apartments in new developments".

### HOUSING PROGRAMS

B.1.(p.30) HCD requested more detail in the Land Inventory Analysis of Residential Potential Section of the Housing Element. Specifically HCD wishes identification of those sites with infrastructure in place. The following details the infrastructure readiness of each zoning/housing type category:

"Single Family" potential consists of 79 subdivision lots in which full infrastructure improvements are in place (street, sewer, water). The remaining area is adjacent to fully developed areas, but will require the subdivider to extend and build services.

## RESPONSES TO HCD'S SUGGESTED CHANGES TO DRAFT HOUSING ELEMENT

Page 3

"Multiple Family and Rental" potential 42 acres consists of 31 acres (620 dwelling unit capacity), with full infrastructure and the remaining 11 acres in need of streets, sewer and water.

"Manufactured Housing" potential's 39 acre condominium project is nearby all services, but will require the developer to extend and build services.

"Residential Redevelopment" potential consists of 41 lots in the "old town" section. All lots have sewer and water services. But approximately 10 lots would require street and sidewalk improvements.

"Currently Non-Residential" potential's 242 acres of proposed residential annexation need additional sewer line capacity, may require additional water wells and will require the building of streets.

The "Other Planned Development" potential consists of the first phase of the Lakeshore Village PUD. Sewer capacity is adjacent, while development may require drilling a well. Street improvements will be required.

B.2.(p.21) Although the City has no formal program for allowing parking or amenity reduction for affordable housing, procedures have been established for such incentives. For example, the City has Optional Design and Improvement code provisions for all residential districts. These provisions have been exercised in the past and has allowed for greater lot coverage, reduced parking and encroachment into set setback areas for affordable housing.

B.3.(p.46) A program promoting fair and equal housing is statutorily required. The Housing Element contains the following policy: "Promptly refer complaints of housing discrimination to the appropriate county, state, or federal agency and assist such agencies as requested".

The City will institute the following program in response to the Fair and Equal Housing Policy:

Program 3.1.1.1: Develop written Staff referral guidelines for fair and equal housing complaints.

Responsible Party: Planning Department

Program Objective: Ensure proper and responsive referral by Staff

Target Date: 1/87



RESOLUTION NO. 2560

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF LOS BANOS ADOPTING AMENDMENT  
OF THE 1985-1992 HOUSING ELEMENT OF THE CITY OF LOS  
BANOS GENERAL PLAN

WHEREAS, there has been presented to the City Council of the City of Los Banos a Draft Housing Element 1985-1992, a letter and Appendix dated March 6, 1986, from Nancy J. McKee of the Department of Housing and Community Development, Division of Housing Policy, and an Addendum to Housing Element 1985-1992, copies of which are attached hereto as Exhibit "A"; and

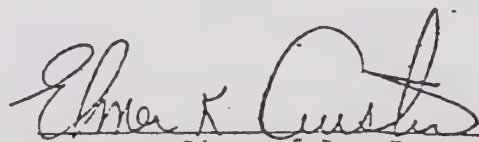
WHEREAS, said Draft Housing Element letter, Appendix and Addendum to Housing Element 1985-1992 as presented have been reviewed, examined and approved by the City Council of the City of Los Banos.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Los Banos that the amendment to the 1985-1992 Housing Element of the General Plan of the City of Los Banos, more particularly described in Exhibit "A", and certification of a Negative Declaration of Environmental Impact is hereby adopted by the City Council of the City of Los Banos.

The foregoing Resolution was introduced at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Los Banos held on the 4th day of June, 1986, by Council Member Loeffler, who moved its adoption, which motion was duly seconded by Council Member O'Brien, and the Resolution adopted by the following vote:

AYES:	COUNCIL MEMBERS	Benidettino, Loeffler, O'Brien, Scott , and Mayor Austin
NOES:	COUNCIL MEMBERS	None
ABSENT:	COUNCIL MEMBERS	None

APPROVED:

  
Mayor - City of Los Banos

ATTEST:

  
Deputy City Clerk - City of Los Banos



LOS BANOS AREA PARKS  
AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

RECREATION ELEMENT

A. GOAL

To develop and maintain recreational areas which will provide for a wide variety of community recreation uses.

B. POLICIES

1. To define existing resources, needs and opportunities for community recreation.
2. To provide a variety of recreation facilities in the community.
3. To explain the role and need for special use facilities such as ball parks, swimming pools, trails, golf course, and other such single purpose areas.

C. TEXT

1. Introduction

Recreation areas can be man made (parks) or natural, such as rivers, mountains, etc. Uses of recreation areas are as varied as the imagination and interest of the user. Recreation is for all ages and can be enjoyed on an individual or group basis. Recreation opportunities must be provided in every community which desires to enhance the quality of life for its citizens.

The current recreational opportunities in Los Banos revolve around the facilities of the city parks, schools, and special use facilities.

Recreation facilities must be established on the basis of "something for everyone". It is important to recognize that often times there are recreational interests which are stymied due to the lack of appropriate facilities to support and cultivate the varied interests of a citizenry.

The Recreation Element is an effort to assist the City in realizing what recreational opportunities currently exist and what must be done to help create a balanced and varied system of recreational facilities.

2. Recommended Standards and Definitions

Los Banos recreational facilities are well above the average for a community of its size. The fourteen parks, ranging in size from  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre to 50 acres for a total of 76 acres, are well distributed both in relation to population and in being near to school facilities.

The standards used in this report relative to the various types, sizes, and location of recreation facilities, are based upon standards recommended by the National Recreation and Park Association and the Park and Recreation Division of the League of California Cities.





Playlots. The playlot is a small area intended for children up to 6 or 7 years of age. It is essentially a substitute for the backyard and thus normally provided only in high-density areas, such as apartments or tenements. Playlots are expensive to maintain and difficult to administer but serve an important function, especially in inner city areas. They range in size from 2,500 square feet up to 1 acre and usually feature play apparatus, a paved area for wheeled toys, benches, sand areas, a small wading or spray pool, and landscape treatment. They should be located within a block or super-block or near the center of a housing development. Children should not be required to cross a major arterial street to reach the playlot. Los Banos has several public "playlots"; such facilities are also very desirable for high density areas such as apartments.

Mini or Vest Pocket Parks. There has been great emphasis of late on mini-parks, which are usually vacant lots combined and converted to recreation use. In some instances, such parks may become permanent features in the neighborhood but should be supportive to adequate open space for all needed facilities. Mini-parks may serve children only, senior citizens only, or any age group, depending on the needs in the neighborhood. The size and location is determined more by the availability of vacant land than any other factor. Mini-parks may feature children's play areas, quiet game areas, landscaping, and some sports activities such as multi-purpose courts if space allows. The typical size of a mini-park is one to three acres.

The mini-park offers other valuable effects. By using vacant lots and removing dilapidated structures, the mini-park can remove existing and potential eyesores and hazards from the City. Additional visual quality can be afforded by both breaks in the continuous structure of residential areas and bright focal points of activity - particularly if the neighborhood is somewhat dilapidated. In cities where mini-parks have been developed and maintained by neighborhood groups, there is evidence that they have helped stimulate a greater sense of civic pride and greater respect for other public properties.

These sites are generally the most expensive to acquire, develop, and maintain in comparison with parks of a larger variety. Detail development in small units, plus heavy maintenance due to intensive use, make mini-parks expensive. The total cost is usually less, however, since there is less land. But they cannot meet the needs of an entire neighborhood. Los Banos now has several mini-parks which are serving the needs of sections of the community.

Neighborhood Parks. A neighborhood park is usually defined as any general use park area of five to 20 acres developed to serve the recreation needs of a particular neighborhood within a community. Neighborhood parks seldom, if ever, include specialized amenities such as swimming pools, gymnasiums, etc., which would attract participation from outside the immediate neighborhood. The location and size of a neighborhood park involves three principal factors:

- Neighborhood population
- Service area
- Major physical boundaries.





The size of the park depends upon the population which resides within the service area of the park. The formula recommended by the California League of Cities and the National Recreation and Park Association calls for a maximum service radius of one-half mile, which puts the park within a reasonable walking distance of potential park patrons. The league also recommends that five acres of parkland be provided for each 1,000 persons. The desirable size of the park is best determined by the population density within the park service area. It is generally accepted that in an urban or semi-urban setting, at least 1,000 persons will reside within one-half to one square mile area, if the area is considered a neighborhood unit. The extent of amenities for neighborhood parks also has a direct bearing on the size and character of the neighborhood park. The amenities recommended by national standards are intended to provide a park which will have an adequate scope of facilities to provide for recreation interests. Typical amenities include:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| --Children's creative play area            | --Special court areas                                   |
| --Group picnic area                        | --Open turf areas                                       |
| --Multiple use game courts                 | --Individual picnic sites                               |
| --Lighting for night use<br>and protection | --Small wading or spray<br>pool                         |
| --Off-street parking as<br>necessary       | --Restroom, storage, and<br>recreation office buildings |

As indicated above, a recreation area of less than 3 acres in size is typically classified as a mini-park, vest pocket park, strip park, or parkette. These parks are sometimes mistakenly referred to as a neighborhood park by lay people. The recommended national standard for neighborhood parks is 2.5 acres per 1,000 residents with a desirable size being five to twenty acres. Los Banos currently has three neighborhood parks which provide many family recreational facilities.

Community Parks. Community parks are those types of leisure facilities planned to serve the recreational needs of many neighborhood areas. This type of facility is usually twenty to fifty acres in size and attracts drive-to clientele in contrast to the walk-to and bike-to characteristics of the neighborhood park.

These larger sites should, if possible, adjoin the public junior and senior high schools. They also encompass the activities formerly included in the "playfield". While the neighborhood sites should be designed to attract and serve the entire neighborhood populations, there are certain recreation facilities needed which require more space than the neighborhood sites should accommodate. Thus, the need for the community park. Other facilities may include a tennis complex, swimming pool, multi-purpose courts, community center, and adequate off-street parking. Parks of this type are best located on or near thoroughfares, easily accessible and distributed so they are within about one to three miles of each home. The increased mobility of teenagers who heavily utilize the community parks tends to widen the radius of the service area. The recommended standard for community parks is 2.5 acres per 1,000, with a minimum size of 20 acres. Los Banos has one community park.



Regional Park. Such parks are normally acquired to provide the urban dweller with an opportunity to get away from the noise and congestion of the city without having to travel a great distance. A central location is desirable but not always possible and the regional park is often located near or outside the city limits.

A minimum of 50 acres is required with 250 to 500 acres being more desirable. This park may feature wooded areas, varying topography and water features, picnic areas, boating and swimming, a nature center, nature, hiking and riding trails, day camps, and some sports facilities on a less formal basis than the community park.

The large urban park usually serves those within a 30-minute drive, which may be 50,000 to 100,000 people. The responsibility for providing these extra-urban parks generally falls upon the county or a regional authority. They should not, under any circumstances, take the place of neighborhood or community parks. The recommended standard for a regional park is 5 acres per 1000 and a minimum size of 50 acres. It is the responsibility of Merced County to provide regional parks in populated areas such as Los Banos.

Parkways. These are essentially elongated parks with a road extending throughout their length. They are usually restricted to bicycle and pedestrian traffic. The parkway generally serves to connect large units in the park system or to provide a pleasant means of travel within the city and between the city and an outlying region.

The parkway usually follows stream or river alignments, shorelines of large lakes, or natural wooded areas. Thus, its location and size is dependent upon the availability and location of these resources. Where this kind of resource does not exist naturally, it is recommended that a parkway effect be created through proper landscape design and planting. Although no specific acreage standard is applicable, a minimum right-of-way of 300 feet is recommended; with portions being much wider for scenic vistas and other uses. Some of the railroad right-of-way and canal banks could provide an opportunity for parkway amenities in Los Banos.

Playfield. A playfield is usually considered as a separate facility of 10 to 20 acres oriented to athletic use. Those uses accommodated by a facility of this nature are football, baseball, softball, track and field, and for this reason a playfield is best located near a large industrial area. Colorado Ball Park and the Ag Sports Complex are examples of playfields in Los Banos.

Usually, by providing major athletic facilities at community parks and by utilizing high school athletic fields, the need for playfields can be met in most communities.

Swimming Pools. Swimming pools, like golf courses, will draw from considerable distances--especially when there are not enough pools to serve the community.

It is highly desirable to include indoor or indoor-outdoor pools in junior and/or senior high schools, and these should be available for elementary school use so swimming can be taught at an early age.





In determining the number of pools required to serve a community, the standard of 15 square feet of water surface for each 3 percent of the population is recommended. This is the same as 450 sq. ft. per 1000 people. Obviously, the configuration of the pool determines its exact water surface area, but the average 50-meter pool will be about 9,000 square feet, thus serving a population of 20,000. A 25-yard pool will serve 10,000 people.

Although swimming is generally thought of as a summertime, outdoor activity, new design trends such as the air-supported roof have liberated the indoor-outdoor concept. Depending on the geographical location, outdoor pools may only be in operation 25-30 percent of the year. The indoor-outdoor pool provides year-round use and is especially important for expanded learn-to-swim programs during the school year. Los Banos now has only one public swimming pool.

Golf Courses. The size of the site will depend primarily on the terrain, vegetation, and shape of the parcel of land. Generally, 75 to 90 acres are required for 9 holes and 120 to 180 acres for 18 holes. A golf course architect should be retained to design any new course and every effort should be made to follow the plans explicitly without cutting corners.

The average golfer may travel 25 miles or more to play an attractive, properly maintained course. It is often desirable to locate a course within or adjacent to a large urban or regional park, but not essential. Although a golf course does not have large capacity for use (350-400 golfers/day or about 80,000 rounds per year may be expected) compared to many other recreation areas, the fact that "open space" is created by its existence should be a factor in determining feasibility. Los Banos is now in need of a municipal golf course.





## SPACE STANDARDS FOR NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Suggested space standards for various units within a typical park.

<u>FACILITY OR UNITS</u>	<u>PARK ADJOINING SCHOOL</u>	<u>SEPARATE PARK</u>
Play apparatus area--pre-school	.25	.25
Play apparatus area--older children	.25	.25
Paved multi-purpose courts	.50	.50
Recreation center building	*	.25
Sports fields	*	5.00
Senior Citizens' area	.50	.50
Quiet areas & outdoor classroom	1.00	1.00
Open or "free play" area	.50	.50
Family picnic area	1.00	1.00
Off-street parking	*	2.30**
Subtotal	4.00	11.55
Landscaping (buffer & special areas)	2.50	3.00
Undesignated space (10%)	.65	1.45
TOTAL	7.15 acres	16.00 acres

\*Provided by elementary school

\*\*Based on 25 cars @ 400 sq. ft. per car



# SPACE STANDARDS FOR COMMUNITY PARKS

Suggested space requirements for various units within the park.

<u>FACILITY OR UNITS</u>	<u>PARK ADJOINING SCHOOL</u>	<u>SEPARATE PARK</u>
Play apparatus area, pre-school	.35	.35
Play apparatus, older children	.35	.35
Paved multi-purpose courts	1.25	1.75
Tennis Complex	1.00	1.00
Recreation center building	*	1.00
Sports fields	1.00	10.00
Senior Citizens' complex	1.90	1.90
Open or "free play" area	2.00	2.00
Archery range	.75	.75
Swimming pool	1.00	1.00
Outdoor theater	.50	.50
Ice rink (artificial)	1.00	1.00
Family picnic area	2.00	2.00
Outdoor classroom area	1.00	1.00
Golf practice hole	*	.75
Off-street parking	1.50	3.00**
Subtotal	15.60	28.35
Landscaping (buffer & special areas)	3.00	6.00
Undesignated space (10%)	1.86	3.43
TOTAL	20.46 acres	37.78 acres

\*Provided by Jr. or Sr. High School

\*\*Based on 330 cars @ 400 sq. ft. per car





## STANDARDS FOR SPECIAL USE FACILITIES

The following standards are recommended for individual recreation facilities:

<u>Facility (outdoor)</u>	<u>Standard/ 1000 people</u>	<u>Comment</u>
Baseball Diamonds	1 per 6,000	Regulation 90'
Softball Diamonds (and/or youth diamonds)	1 per 3,000	
Tennis Courts	1 per 2,000	Best in battery of 4
Basketball Courts	1 per 500	
Swimming Pools--25 yard	1 per 10,000	Based on 15 sq. ft. of water for 3% of population.
Swimming Pools--50 meter	1 per 20,000	
Skating Rinks (artificial)	1 per 30,000	
Neighborhood Centers	1 per 10,000	
Community Centers	1 per 25,000	
Outdoor Theaters (non-commercial)	1 per 20,000	
Shooting Ranges	1 per 50,000	Complete complex incl. high power, small bore, trap and skeet, field archery, etc.
Golf Courses (18 hole)	1 per 25,000	

Most of the above mentioned facilities are desirable in small communities, although their population may actually be less than the standard. Every effort should be made to light facilities for night use, thus extending availability.



Inventory of Los Banos Parks, Recreation, and Special Facilities

Local Parks, Existing

PARK NAME	Type	Acreage	Co	In	Bu	Pl	Fa	Gr	Sw	Cr	Ba	So	Te	La	Co	Mu	Sh	Hd	Op	Wa	Gy	Ni	Co	Bc	Da	Th	R	F
Miller & Lux Center															X													
Skylark Park	M	1.12				X													X									
Davis Park	M	.5				X													X									
Citrus Park #2	M	.2				X	X												X									
Citrus Park #1	M	.1				X																						
City Park	M	.75				X										X			X									
Talbott Park	C	11				X	X	X		P				P		P	P	X	P	X		P				P		
Colorado Park	N	2.5				P	X	X			X	X	X						X	X		X						
Big Page Park	M	.75				X	X												X									
Wolfsen Park	M	1																	X									
Flag Pole Park	M	.5																	X									
Los Banos Gardens Park	M	.5				X	X									X			X									
Catholic Park	M	.2				X													X									
Little Page Park	M	.2				X													X									
Presidential Estates Park	M	.2				X	P											P	X									
County Park	N	2				X	X	X	X						X	X			X	X		X				X		
Los Banos Regional Park	R	50				P	P	P			X				X			P	X	X	P	X						
<u>Local Parks, Proposed</u>																												
Gardens II Park	N	5				P																						
Airport Lake Dev.	C	15				P	P	P											P	P								
Talbott Addition	C	9																	P		P							
College Estates Park	N	5				P			P				P						P	P		P				P		
Crest Hills Park	N	3.5				P	P	P											P									
San Luis Park	N	5				P						P																
Overland Park	N	5				P	P												P									
Ranchwood Park	N	5				P	P		P	P	P				P	P			P							P		
Park Manor Park	N	5				P	P									P			P							P		
<u>Proposed Special Facilities</u>																												
Golf Course	R	140				P	P	P					P		P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P						
Bowling Center Dev.	C	20																							P	P		
Flyway Trail	R	NA		P																P								
Youth Hunting Club	R	50			P																							
Interpretive Center	R	NA		P																								
Wetlands Park	R	1,000	P	P	P																							
Los Banos Grandes City Camp	R	100	P	P			P	P													P							
Performing Arts Theatre	R	5																									P	
Merced Springs Charleston Park	R	50	P				P		P											P							P	
Volta Park	R	50	P	P			P		P											P								
Stockton Pond			P																									P

X = Existing Facility  
 P = Proposed Facility  
 M = Mini Park  
 N = Neighborhood Facility  
 C = Community Park  
 R = Regional Park





# LOS BANOS AREA PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

## Existing Parks

1. Miller & Lux Center
2. Skylark Park
3. Davis Park
4. Citrus Terrace II Park
5. Citrus Terrace Park
6. City Park
7. Talbott Park
8. Colorado Park
9. Big Page Park
10. Wolfson Park
11. Flag Pole Park
12. Los Banos Gardens Park
13. Catholic Park
14. Little Page Park
15. Presidential Estates
16. County Park
17. Regional Park

## Proposed Special Facilities

26. Golf Course
27. Bowling Center
28. Flyway Interpretive Trail
29. Youth Hunting Area
30. Interpretive Center
31. Wetlands Park
32. Los Banos Grandes City Camp
33. Performing Arts Theatre
34. Mercey Springs Charleston Park
35. Volta Park
36. Stockton Pond

## Proposed Schools

- A Elementary School
- B Middle School
- C Elementary School

## Proposed Parks

18. Gardens II Park
19. Airport Approach Park
20. Talbott Park Addition
21. College Estates Park
22. Crest Hills Park
23. San Luis Park
24. Overland Park
25. Ranchwood Park
- 5.5. Park Manor Park

← GILROY 47 miles

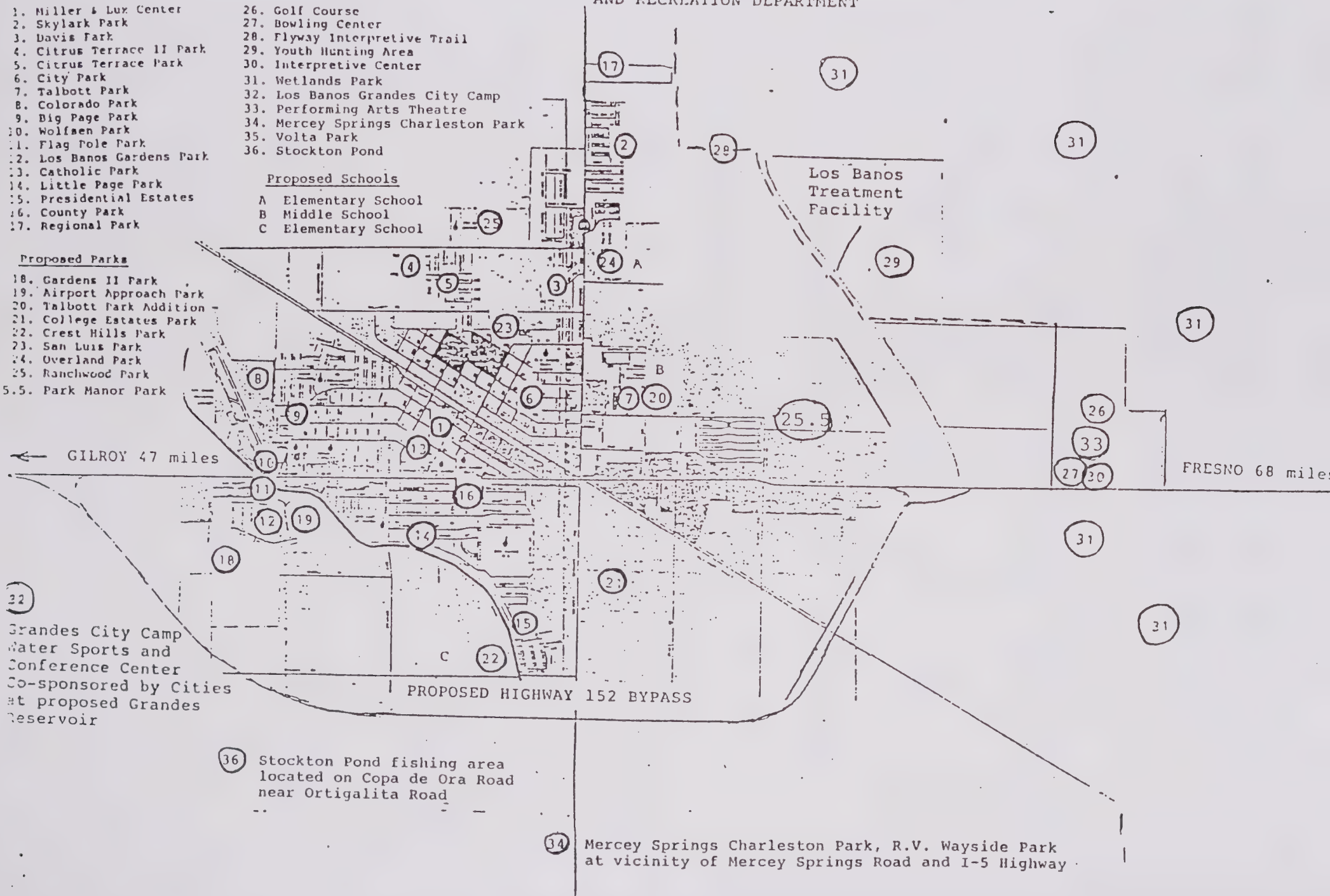
FRESNO 68 miles

22. Grandes City Camp  
Water Sports and  
Conference Center  
Co-sponsored by Cities  
at proposed Grandes  
Reservoir

PROPOSED HIGHWAY 152 BYPASS

36. Stockton Pond fishing area  
located on Copa de Ora Road  
near Ortigalita Road

34. Mercey Springs Charleston Park, R.V. Wayside Park  
at vicinity of Mercey Springs Road and I-5 Highway





#### 4. Existing Recreation Resources vs. Recommended Standards

The following information is intended to outline the existing recreation resources in the Los Banos General Plan Area and how they compare with the recommended standards of the National Park and Recreation Association.

##### a. Park Lands

<u>Type</u>	NRPA Standard * Rec	Exist. Total Acres	Exist. Per 1000 ** Pop.	Prop. Total Acres	Prop. Per 1000 ** Pop.
Mini Parks .	No Rec	4.6	.18	4.6	.18
Neighborhood Parks	2.5	9.5	.38	38	1.52
Community Parks	1.5	11.0	.44	44	1.76
Regional Parks	<u>6.0</u>	<u>50.0</u>	<u>2.00</u>	<u>190</u>	<u>7.6</u>
Total Park Lands	10.0	71.3	3.00	276.6	11.1

\*Recommended Park Acres per 1,000 people

\*\*Population estimated at 25,000 people for planning area

#### Local Recreation Facilities

<u>Name</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Use</u>
Colorado Ball Park	Special Use - Public	Athletic Activities, Youth
Ag Sports Dome	Community Bldg. - Public	Rec. Activities
Ag Sports Complex	Special Use - Public	Athletic Activities, Adults
Los Banos Swim Pool	Special Use - Public	Aquatic Activities
Los Banos Recreation Center	Community Bldg. -Public	Community Social & Rec. Activities
Los Banos Scout House	Special Use - Public	Boy Scout and Rec. Activities
Miller & Lux Center	Special Use - Public	Senior Services & Rec. Activities
Talbott Center	Community Bldg. - Public	Rec. Activities
Los Banos High Gymnasium	Special Use - Public	School & Community Uses
Los Banos Jr. High Gymnasium	Special Use - Public	School & Community Uses
Fairgrounds Gymnasium	Special Use - Public	Fairgrounds and Community Use





Name	<u>Schools</u>		Play Apparatus	Swim Pool	Baseball Diamond	Softball Diamond	Tennis Courts	Multi Purpose Ctr	Off Street Parking	Open Areas	Gymnasium
	Total Acres	Open Space Acres									
s Banos Elem.	10	4	X			X		X	X	X	
nry Miller Elem.	8	6	X			X		X	X	X	
ano Elem.	8	6	X			X		X	X	X	
s Banos Jr. High	5	3	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
s Banos High	44	40	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
lta	8	7	X			X		X	X	X	
arlestson	5	4	X			X		X	X	X	
L.F. (Private)			X		X	X		X	X	X	
venth Day											
dventist			X			X			X	X	
n Luis High	5	4							X	X	
Private Contin.)											
<u>Developed</u>											
te A Elem. School	10	8	P			P		P	P	P	
te B Middle School	20	16	P		P	P	P	P	P	P	P
te C Elem. School	10	8	P			P		P	P	P	

## 5. Regional Facilities

The County of Merced Parks and Recreation Department has the primary responsibility for acquiring and developing regional public recreation lands. In the past, the County has placed its emphasis upon providing regional facilities which are of county-wide significance. Although this emphasis is continuing, the County has demonstrated its concern for providing local facilities to unincorporated areas within the County where regional or existing nearby City facilities do not meet the local need. The City, in developing its own open-space and recreation system, could have a total system available to its residents which would more than meet the criteria and objectives of the state's conservation and open-space legislation.

State and Federal Recreation Areas should be incorporated into the local park system as resources, which can be made more available to local citizens through joint planning efforts.

## 6. Park Development and Maintenance Cost Standards

One of the more obvious considerations related to any single recreation facility or a total park and recreation system, must be what will it cost to acquire the needed property and develop the facility desired. Another consideration, which is important but often overlooked, is what will it cost to maintain and operate the facility on a yearly basis. Often, the cost of operating a facility will surpass the original development cost in a 10 - 15 year time period. Any public agency which is not able or willing to properly operate their public facilities should consider the ramifications. Facilities which are poorly supervised and maintained can often be characterized by the following:



## State, Federal, and County Areas

<u>Type and Location</u>	<u>Comments</u>
1. County Park, Los Banos	County Park located on State Hwy. 152 in the heart of Los Banos is maintained by the City of Los Banos, through a special agreement with the County of Merced. Site is 2 acres, and includes a Museum, Scout House, Recreation Hall, and Library.
2. State Park San Luis Reservoir and O'Neill Forebay	State Park area offers overnight camping, picnic facilities for day use, fishing, and water sports opportunities. Additional recreation areas are being added to this State Recreation area located on Hwy. 152 about 8 miles East of Los Banos.
3. State Los Banos Creek Detention Reservoir	Located about 8 miles from Los Banos, this State Recreation area offers sailing, water sports, camping, and fishing opportunities for the recreationist. The reservoir supports an excellent seasonal trout fishery.
4. State Dept. of Fish & Game Los Banos Wildlife Area	State Wildlife area located on Henry Miller Road, approximately 3 miles from Los Banos area, offers fishing, hunting, camping, and wildlife observation opportunities.
5. National Wildlife Refugees	Three National Wildlife Refugees, "Kesterson NWR, San Luis NWR, and Merced NWR" are located within a 20 minute drive of Los Banos. These areas offer wildlife observation, photography, hunting, fishing, and picnicing opportunities. Many local residents have never experienced the natural enjoyment that is provided with a visit to these areas.
6. State Dept. Water Resources Los Banos Grandes Reservoir	Proposed reservoir approximately 10 miles West of Los Banos and South of the existing San Luis Reservoir may offer unique opportunities for recreation. Less fluctuation in water level and less wind could make the Los Banos Grandes Reservoir the most popular State Recreation area in the Valley. An opportunity exists for developing a joint City-State Recreation area at the reservoir.





- a. A low level of use by the community;
- b. A general lack of pride and respect for the facility and perhaps for those who operate it;
- c. A high degree of vandalism which can be partly attributed to a. and b. above.

The maintenance and development standards below are based upon estimates of several Park Directors who are involved with park development and maintenance on a daily basis. These standards represent the current average cost of developing and maintaining neighborhood parks similar to those existing and proposed in the Planning Area. The following should be used for general reference, only as each individual recreation area has its own unique maintenance and operational requirements. It should be understood that these costs change with the inflationary patterns and will need to be updated at least on an annual basis.

Park Acquisition. Confidential and informal guestimates can be made by the staff based upon zoning, similar land sales, etc. It is recommended that a professional appraiser be used to determine the fair market value of property which the City intends to acquire. Los Banos City Ordinance #769 sets the policy whereby park lands can be dedicated in new subdivisions.

Park Development. The cost obviously depends upon the method of development, i.e. volunteer material-labor as compared with all development done by a private contractor. The average development cost for neighborhood parks is approximately \$30,000 per acre. Currently, the average cost for a complete five acre neighborhood park would be approximately as follows:

Surveying & Grading.....	\$ 18,000
Irrigation System (automatic).....	30,000
Concrete & Asphalt (Slabs, Walks, Parking, etc.).....	15,000
Utilities (sewer, electrical, etc.).....	15,000
Landscaping (turf, trees, shrubs).....	30,000
Children's Play Area (equipment, play surface).....	15,000
Control Building (restrooms, storage).....	18,000
Family Picnic Areas (slabs, tables, etc.).....	4,500
Design Fees (concept, construction drawings, etc.)...	<u>15,000</u>
Total	\$160,500

A policy for collection of fees for park development in new subdivisions is included in Los Banos City Ordinance #769. This ordinance must continue to be updated. Of critical importance is the need to establish a system of providing funding for rehabilitation of existing facilities.

Maintenance and Operation. It is very difficult to determine an average cost for park maintenance, as many variables have an effect on maintenance cost. The size of the area, wages of personnel, type of development, level of use, degree of vandalism, etc., all affect the total cost of maintenance. The most prominent factor affecting the cost is the level of maintenance provided to the area. A general rule of Park Administrators is that the park should always be an asset to the neighborhood and the community. It should be understood that a park is a focal point within a community and can be an asset or a liability to good community relations.



A realistic maintenance cost per acre for neighborhood parks similar to the five acre park mentioned above is \$3,750 per acre per year. This per acre cost includes cost for personnel, utilities and supplies for a neighborhood park of typical development and use. The per acre cost for maintenance tends to decrease as the park size increases.

There is a need to provide a dependable method of providing revenue for adequate park maintenance. In new subdivisions, assessment districts can be formed to include park maintenance, however, a need exists to find a method of financing continuous maintenance of existing facilities.





D. ACTION PROGRAM FOR CITY OF LOS BANOS

1. Adopt the park and recreation standards outlined in this report.
2. Take steps to acquire and develop additional park lands by utilizing City Ordinance No. 769.
3. Periodically review and modify Ordinance No. 769 as needs change, land values increase, and the cost of park development rises.
4. Encourage the County of Merced, as well as other State and Federal Agencies, to help implement the action needed to meet the local recreation space needs of City and County residents.
5. Continually update the growth population projections of the General Plan and take appropriate steps to acquire and develop needed park, recreation, and community facility areas.
6. Cooperate with local school district and Merced College in providing multi use community, park, and recreation facilities.
7. A bicycle and walking trail system should be adopted with the proposed "Flyway Trail" as the focal point for the system. Some equestrian use may also be planned.
8. Adopt a policy requiring establishment of assessment districts and service areas for continuous maintenance and operation of park, recreation, and community facilities.
9. Consider alternative methods of providing a permanent revenue source for operation of park, recreation, and community service facilities. One alternative to be considered is a community services area to be funded by an annual contribution based on parcels within the service area.
10. Examine all policies regarding fees and charges in order not to exclude the citizenry from services or to over charge any segment of the community for park, recreation, or community services.
11. Promote the establishment of conservation easements on lands surrounding the proposed Golf Course development north of Highway 152, east of Los Banos.
12. Establish a major wildlife, botanical, and historical interpretive visitors center along Highway 152, east of Los Banos, including the preservation of the Milan Indian Village Archeological site.
13. Provide commercial recreation opportunities, including a Bowling Center site north of Highway 152, east of Los Banos.



14. Participate in development of a major trail system linking Local, State, and Federal Recreation Areas around Los Banos.
15. Join other cities in establishing a "City Camp" at the proposed Los Banos Grandes Reservoir. Such a camp could be developed similar to Camp Green Meadows as an Environmental Center for the "inlands" of California.
16. Continue to encourage development of needed City Social/Recreational services, including but not limited to, Day Care Services, Transportation Services, Senior Services, Therapeutic Recreation, and Economic Development opportunities which create jobs for local residents.
17. Develop Community Parks adjacent to any proposed new school sites.





E.

LOS BANOS AREA PARKS  
AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

The following is a preliminary list of possible capital improvement projects to be considered by the year 2,000. Financing of the projects may be from private or public sources. Development could also be a result of joint agency efforts.

<u>I. Existing Park/ Recreation Projects</u>	<u>Improvements</u>	<u>1989 Cost Estimates</u>
1. Los Banos Regional Park	Soccer/Football Field #3 Landscaping	\$ 100,000 65,000
2. Presidential Estates	Equipment Picnic Shelter/Neighborhood	4,500 30,000
3. Miller & Lux Center	Kitchen/First Floor Completion Renovation Outside and Decking	50,000 50,000
4. Talbott Park	Irrigation/Park Improvements Picnic Shelter/Restrooms Future Park Addition (East)	50,000 120,000 125,000
5. Colorado Park	Landscape Improvements Concession Building Remodeling	15,000 50,000
6. Skylark Park	Future Park Addition (East) Senior Center	125,000 250,000
7. Citrus Park I	Equipment and Landscaping	3,000
8. Citrus Park II Addition	Equipment and Landscaping	111,500
9. Gardens Park	Landscaping and Equipment	10,000
10. City Park	Landscaping and Equipment	10,000
11. Catholic Park	Equipment and Landscaping	2,500
12. Davis Park	Equipment and Landscaping	2,500
13. Little Page Park	Equipment and Landscaping	2,500
14. County Park	Landscaping/Building Rehab	200,000
SUB TOTAL:		\$ 1,376,500

The following parks require detailed planning for Park and Recreation facilities. Estimated development fees for proposed parks are projected.

<u>II. New Developments</u>	<u>Est. Lots</u>	<u>Est. Dev. Fee</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Proposed Park</u>
1. Ranchwood Units 1-5	191	\$ 61,884	2	
2. Ranchwood - Frig. - Toscano	650	210,600	7	Ranchwood
3. Ranchwood - Giannoni	600	194,400	6.5	Pinelli/ San Luis

5. Cresthills #2, Unit 1	322	104,328	3.5	Cresthills
6. College Green, Phase 1	31	10,044		
7. College Green, Phase 2 on	500	162,000	5.7	College Green
8. Bedford Place	98	52,724	NA	Skylark
9. Orchard Terrace	171	55,404	1.8	Citrus II
10. Los Banos Gardens #2	158	51,192	1.7	
11. Los Banos Gardens #4	231	74,844	2.5	Gardens II
12. St. Francis Estates	308	165,704	NA	Ag Sports Regional
13. Valley Meadows	89	47,882	NA	
14. Lakeshore	450	145,800	4.9	Skylark Addition
15. Park Manor	512	165,888	5.5	Talbott
16. K & K Eagle	200	64,800	2.2	Airport Lake
SUB TOTALS:		4,583	\$ 1,590,822	44.1

Several regional projects are being proposed within the Los Banos Unified School District. The Los Banos Area Park and Recreation Department will be the lead agency for these projects.

<u>III. Special Projects</u>	<u>Est. Lots</u>	<u>Est. Dev. Fee</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Proposed Park</u>
* Amabile/Sansoni	2,000	\$ 5,000,000	180	Golf/Bowling Cult. Center
* Grandes City Camp	NA	950,000	100	Resident Camp
* Equity Concepts	New Project	?	?	Golf ?
* Stockton Pond	NA	150,000	15	Day Camp
* Mercey Springs Wayside Park	NA	950,000	100	R.V. Picnic Camp Grounds
* Wetlands Park	NA	2,000,000	1,000	Preserve
* Los Banos Swim Complex	NA	150,000	NA	Rehab.
SUB TOTALS:		2,000	\$ 9,200,000	1,395
* Project Development is funded from project revenue or State, Federal, and Local Grants.				

<u>IV. Equipment</u>	<u>Improvements</u>	<u>1989 Cost Estimates</u>
1. Transportation Elderly and Handicapped	Two Vans	\$ 50,000
2. Street Trees	Boom Truck Spray Equipment Root Remover	70,000 15,000 7,000
3. Lawn Maintenance	Two Riding Mowers Thatcher	20,000 15,000
4. Park Development	Tractor with Loader and Backhoe Attachments	60,000
5. Recreation	Two Mini Vans	30,000
6. Parks	Four Pick-ups	60,000
SUB TOTAL:		\$ 327,000





LOS BANOS AREA PARKS  
AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

PARK AND RECREATION ELEMENT  
to  
THE LOS BANOS GENERAL PLAN

Prepared for  
Los Banos City Council

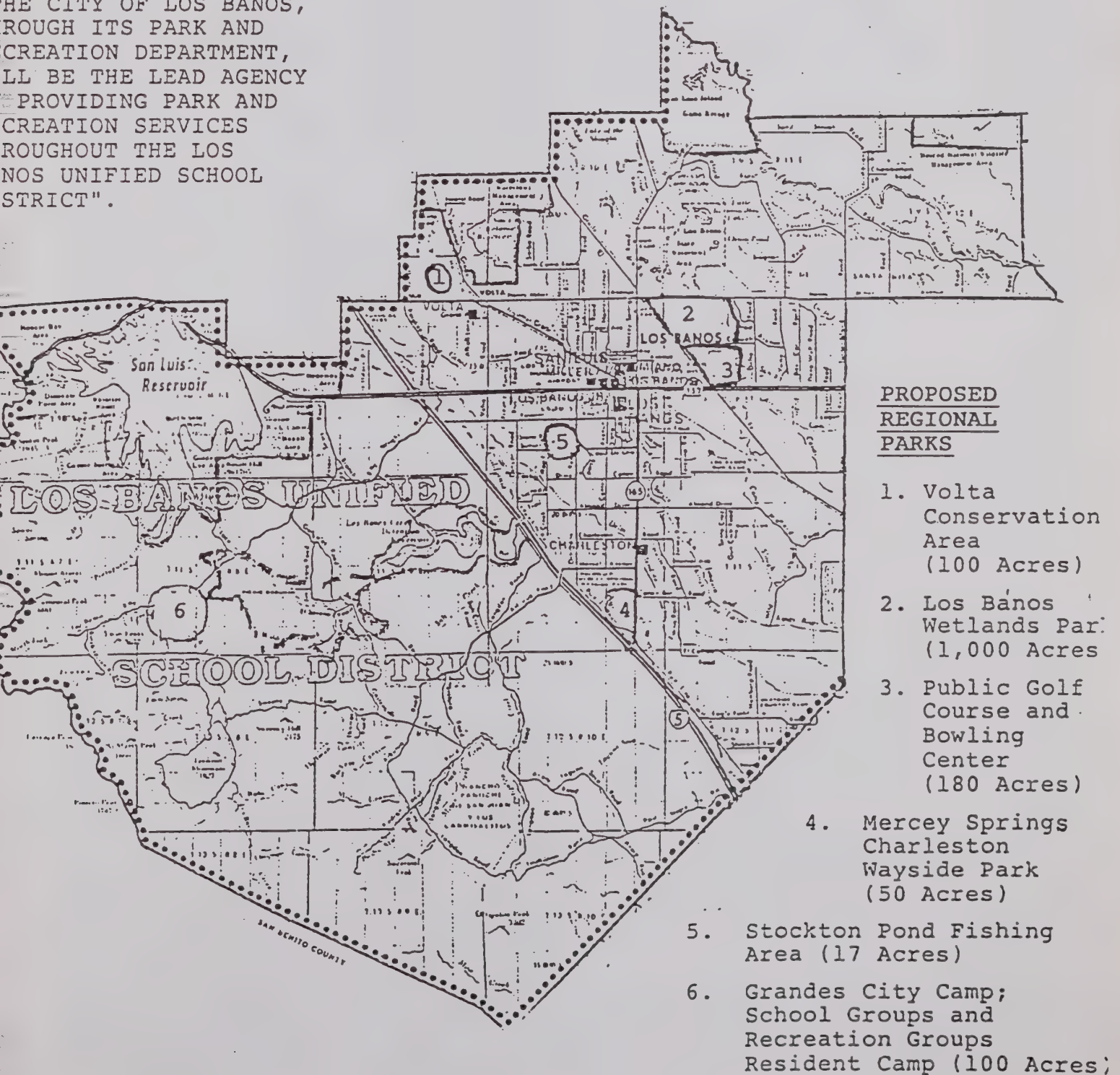
by

Richard L. Dahlgren  
Park and Recreation Director

830 SIXTH STREET  
LOS BANOS, CALIFORNIA 93635  
TELEPHONE (209) 826-0325

September 21, 1988

THE CITY OF LOS BANOS,  
THROUGH ITS PARK AND  
RECREATION DEPARTMENT,  
WILL BE THE LEAD AGENCY  
IN PROVIDING PARK AND  
RECREATION SERVICES  
THROUGHOUT THE LOS  
BANOS UNIFIED SCHOOL  
DISTRICT".







RESOLUTION NO. 2888

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF LOS BANOS ADOPTING THE COMPREHENSIVE GENERAL PLAN FOR THE CITY OF LOS BANOS WITH FINDING AND OVERRIDING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS PERTAINING TO THE GENERAL PLAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

WHEREAS, the City of Los Banos recognizes the need to update and revise its present twenty-six (26) year old General Plan; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Los Banos is experiencing a building and population growth hereto not experienced in past years; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Los Banos wishes to provide a solid foundation for orderly growth for the City of Los Banos and its environs; and,

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive General Plan has undergone an intensive two and one-half (2 1/2) year review by City Council, Planning Commission, and a Citizen Advisory Committee as well as the General Public.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Los Banos does make the following Findings concerning the City of Los Banos Comprehensive General Plan:

1. That there is a need for a Comprehensive General Plan in order to regulate and stimulate orderly growth and development in the community.
2. That there is a specific need to provide affordable housing reasonably available within the city limits of the City of Los Banos.
3. That there is a need to provide adequate open space and recreational facilities for the City of Los Banos and its residents.
4. That there is a need to provide efficient and reasonable transportation alternatives for the residents of the City of Los Banos and those traveling through the City; and
5. That all reasonable and feasible mitigation measures have been instituted to minimize the unavoidable adverse impacts on air, storm water drainage and agricultural lands.

GERMIND, BRODIE, RUNTE, AMARAL, JORDAN & CARPENTER

1120 WEST I STREET, SUITE B

P. O. BOX 991

LOS BANOS, CALIFORNIA 93635



BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in terms of the goals of the City of Los Banos Comprehensive General Plan, the City Council of the City of Los Banos makes a finding of overriding social and economic considerations these seven goals are as follows:

Goal No. 1:

Policies and proposals of the General Plan should seek to expand job-creating and revenue-generating activities, including levels of retail, commercial service and industrial expansion which are necessary to support government services required by the expanding population base consistent with the rate of population growth established by the General Plan.

Goal No. 2:

The City should seek to maximize the potential of the community as a place of affordable residence for households currently employed outside of Los Banos, consistent with the rate of population growth established by the General Plan.

Goal No. 3:

It is a goal of the General Plan to preserve and enhance the quality of living by preventing the degradation of the natural and man-made environment, and by taking steps to offset the effects of that degradation which already has occurred.

Goal No. 4:

Ultimate expansion of the City, as depicted by the General Plan Diagram, is to be phased to create a physical form and character which improves the ways in which the community functions and is enjoyed, and to result in the conversion of agricultural land to urban use only at such time as conversion is necessary to meet the needs of the community.

Goal No. 5:

New development (public as well as private) is to reflect high levels of community appearance and image through development regulations which express appropriate concern for visual quality through site planning and engineering, architectural design, landscaping, use of signs, and the maintenance of public and private buildings and sites.

Equal Opportunity

Goal No. 6:

Insofar as reasonably may be possible, policies and proposals of the General Plan should provide

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LOS BANOS, CALIFORNIA 93635





for equal opportunity in the availability of jobs, housing and public services needed by existing residents, ethnic minorities, and people of low and moderate income who may choose to live and work in Los Banos.

Growth Management

Goal No. 7:

The City should seek to manage the rate of urban expansion at a level which does not exceed the capacity of the City to provide the necessary levels of community services and facilities required consistent with all others goals of the General Plan. Management policies and techniques should rely on indirect rather than direct means, recognizing that flexibility is both essential and desirable if significant progress toward goal achievement is to be realized over time.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Los Banos does hereby adopt the Comprehensive General Plan for the City of Los Banos.

The foregoing Resolution was introduced at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Los Banos held on the 19th day of April, 1989, by Council Member Scott, who moved its adoption, which motion was duly seconded by Council Member Sparks and the Resolution was adopted by the following vote:

AYES: COUNCIL MEMBERS Ferry, O'Brien, Scott and Sparks

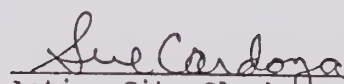
NOES: COUNCIL MEMBERS None

ABSENT: COUNCIL MEMBERS Mayor Austin

APPROVED:

  
Mayor - City of Los Banos

ATTEST:

  
Acting City Clerk of City of Los Banos

GERMIND, BRODIE, RUNTE, AMARAL, JORDAN & CARPENTER

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P. O. BOX 891

LOS BANOS, CALIFORNIA 93635



CITY OF LOS BANOS

CONSERVATION/OPEN SPACE ELEMENTS  
of the  
LOS BANOS GENERAL PLAN

Planning Commission

Joe Ferry, Chairman  
Gus Villalta, Vice-Chairman  
Sam Benidettino  
Robert Lynn  
Nick Nahas  
Norman Swanson  
Joe Vajretti

Approved: September 12, 1973

City Council

Neil B. Van Winkle, Mayor  
Elmer K. Austin, Mayor Pro Tem  
Roy Lower  
Elge D. Mastrangelo  
John Torre

Adopted: November 21, 1973 by Resolution No. 1538





## CONSERVATION ELEMENT

Conservation of natural resources is a major concern of every jurisdiction. Previously this matter has been somewhat neglected as part of urban growth and management policies. As a result, the State has mandated that each City and County include in their General Plan elements concerning the careful management of natural resources.

In defining a planning area it has been concluded that two spheres of influence are within the Los Banos area. The first area and immediate planning area (primary sphere of influence) which includes the City and its adjacent areas bounded on the north by Henry Miller Road; on the East by Santa Fe Canal; on the South by the easterly and westerly prolongations of Phillips Road; on the West by Los Banos Creek. The second area, the greater sphere of interest would also include land easterly to San Pedro Canal, southerly to the Freeway (Interstate 5), and westerly to the San Luis Dam site. The major emphasis on this report shall be the city and primary sphere of influence.

### GOALS:

The goals of the Conservation Element shall be:

To continue to identify areas of critical environmental concern and to take steps to aid proper resource management.

To establish procedures to control and review development concerning natural resource areas within the City and its spheres of influence and examine the



effect of development viewed from a conservation and environmental aspect, not only from an economic standpoint.

To accomplish these goals, an optimum land use map should be developed in conjunction with the revising of that element of the General Plan.

This product can be obtained by evaluating intrinsic land use suitabilities based on critical environmental facts as exemplified in the accompanying charts. Thus, consideration of the compatibility of potential land uses with the constraints and opportunities of the physical environment will be at its maximum while preserving environmental quality.

#### RESOURCE AREAS:

Los Banos is in the center of a major resource area, namely, agriculture and wildlife-recreation, and thereby derives a substantial portion of its economic viability from these resources and therefore it is in the City's best interest to preserve and to aid in their effective land management.

#### LAND:

The land is a community's most basic commodity. It is a limited resource and its use, in the past, has been primarily controlled by economic influences, not by its most effective environmental capability. Currently, approximately thirty eight percent (38%) of the land area within the City Limits is vacant or agricultural, by-passed by leap-frogging development.

A coordinated effort among all segments of the community





to conserve this resource should be part of a comprehensive plan to give new meaning to such viable concepts of land compatability and open space. Reserve areas of land should be designated for future development.

#### SOILS:

The Los Banos area soils are derived from alluvial deposits of waterways of the east slopes of the Coast Range. The primary source of deposits are from the Los Banos Creek and tributaries to the south. The soils in general are fine-textured clayee soils, having some saline and water table restrictions. Among the fine-textured soils are silts and siltloams.

Those soils which have been in cultivation and irrigated for a number of years are, in general, free from injurious salts and serious water table problems.

Generally, those soils on the north and east are fine-textured clayee soils with saline-alkali problems and may have associated high water table conditions.

Those soils in the City proper, north-south and to the west, are generally free of injurious salts, but may have some water table conditions.

Much of the productivity of the soils relate to past use. All of the soils in the area are suited to cultivation. However, the prime agricultural soils are primarily located to the west and southwest. Agricultural capability is depicted on the Generalized Soils Map. Soil classification is defined as follows:

Class I and Class II -- Prime agricultural lands with little or no restrictions in use or cultivation.



Class III and Class IV -- Secondary agricultural lands having moderate to severe restrictions in use or cultivation. These restrictions are due to saline-alkali and water table conditions.

Serious consideration should be given placement of urban uses when they would severely deplete the inventory of prime soils. Increased studies of the bearing capacity of soils within the primary area is necessary.

#### AGRICULTURE:

Prime agricultural activity abounds around the City and Los Banos is a hub for processing a considerable number of agricultural commodities, i.e., alfalfa, beef, dairy products, melons, sugar beets, etc. Within the City marginal agriculture takes place on areas not yet consumed by urban uses. On the fringe areas of the primary area of influence are intensive agricultural pursuits developing into larger operations within the greater area of effect. Agriculture is a valuable local and regional resource and urban use should be planned to conserve this resource as long as feasibly possible

#### VEGATIVE COVER:

Very little of the original native cover remains. Marsh-grass of pre-Henry Miller era has been replaced by introduced plants and cultivated crops. Vegetation correlates highly with soil type. An on-site examination for unique vegative species should take place prior to development of an area and if such plans exist a determination should be made if preservation is of





a high priority nature.

#### WILDLIFE:

The wildlife population in Los Banos, as is the case with Merced County in general, has declined with the urbanization and cultivation of the land. Six types of habitat associations are located in the greater Los Banos area, four of which are located in the immediate planning area.

Grasslands habitat located in the extreme western portion of the greater sphere of Los Banos supports only minimal numbers of wildlife and is considered non-critical.

Lakes and reservoirs habitat located at San Luis Reservoir and Los Banos Creek Reservoir supports mammals and birds on borders and the water area is used as a resting area for water birds in addition to supporting fish and other aquatic life. This habitat type is generally considered non-critical and is protected by public ownership.

Agricultural habitat extensively surrounding the City has the status of non-critical due to the fluctuations in land use and farming practices which tend to discourage extensive wildlife populations.

Urban-industrial habitat areas have only a remnant wildlife population made up of the most man-tolerant species and is considered non-critical.

Riparian habitat is considered critical as these narrow borders offer protective cover and moisture benefit to most species of mammals and birds found within the local area.



Wetland habitat (marsh and seasonal marsh) is considered critical to reflect the overall use of wildlife. However, in addition, the local wetlands have historical significance as wintering grounds for waterfowl, and as such this habitat cannot be replaced. Associated with the wetlands habitat are the flyways of the migrating waterfowl generally located to the east of Santa Fe Grade but also having secondary patterns over and around the City. To augment the wetlands, habitat refuges and gun clubs within the general area are flooded to provide additional habitat for migrating waterfowl. Wildlife sport and recreation associated with the wetlands habitat contributes substantially to the City's economy.

In addition to the described habitat types, the canals and sloughs of the area support substantial fish resources for recreation.

Placement of urban uses should be given great concern in order to conserve critical wildlife areas.

#### WATER RESOURCES:

Annual precipitation of the Los Banos area averages about nine inches (9"), almost entirely during the winter months. The runoff follows the stream and canal pattern of the area and percolates into the ground water supply.

The limited rainfall and stream flows, which are controlled by retention dams to the west, are augmented by summer irrigation releases for surrounding farms and ranches.

A high water table develops to the east on the San Joaquin Basin and Slough providing the grasslands with near year-





round wetness, also augmented by releases from canal systems.

A high evapotranspiration rate during the hot summer months produces an acute demand on the water supply of the area.

Water bearing strata underlies Merced County and the Corcoran clay forms an impervious layer, preventing deep percolation of water into lower zones.

The water quality of Los Banos ground water is good, with little treatment needed for human purposes although high in mineral content. Discharge of ground water occurs by percolation with main areas along stream beds.

Urban development and proper water quality must be coordinated in order to maintain proper standards for water resources.

Due to the level terrain and high water tables, drainage within Los Banos is a major problem. Additional development must provide methods of reducing excess water in short periods of time from developed lands.

#### FLOOD CONTROL:

According to the Merced County Stream Group Flood Control Project, major flood plains are not within the Los Banos Planning Area. This is due mainly to previous flood control projects which have eliminated the major danger from flooding. Potential hazards still exist from the streams originating in the west hills, Los Banos Creek, and other minor water courses. A buffer zone of limited construction and land usage along the stream beds and canal banks would reduce public damage and provide for better groundwater recharge.



## ANALYSIS OF CRITICAL RESOURCE AREAS:

In analyzing resources areas within the immediate Planning Area, it is the consensus of a representative group of citizens of Los Banos, acting in an advisory capacity, that although certain resources areas (agriculture/soil and wildlife habitat) are generally classified as critical and are potentially areas for conservation measures. They are of only marginal quality when viewed from the local perspective. That transition of these areas to urban uses would be an insignificant loss and would not have a detrimental effect on adjacent resources areas.

It was further found that for the enhancement of future growth of the City little, if any, restrictions as to future urban uses should be placed on these lands which would allow for maximum flexibility for future growth and maintenance of urban quality within Los Banos.

However, the advisory group is of the opinion that critical areas of concern for conservation exist surrounding primary planning area and the community should influence their preservation in order to maintain environmental quality.

## RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATIONS:

1. That the Open Space Element will serve as a method for implementation of the conservation facets and thereby be a coexistent part of both elements.
2. That all projects be examined carefully as provided for by the Resolution on Environmental Quality.
3. That areas of the City be continually inventorized



in respect to their value as conservation resources and for compatibility of adjacent uses.

4. That land resources be conserved to allow for phased growth of the City by providing land conservation areas of limited development for an Urban Development Reserve.

5. That the community place increased emphasis on methods to upgrade the sewage disposal system in order to meet future water quality standards.

6. That attention be placed developing a satisfactory drainage system which will not have adverse affects on the adjacent areas.

7. That an Agricultural Zone be established to allow for transitional area between urban-rural uses and as a buffer to preserve major resources of the area.

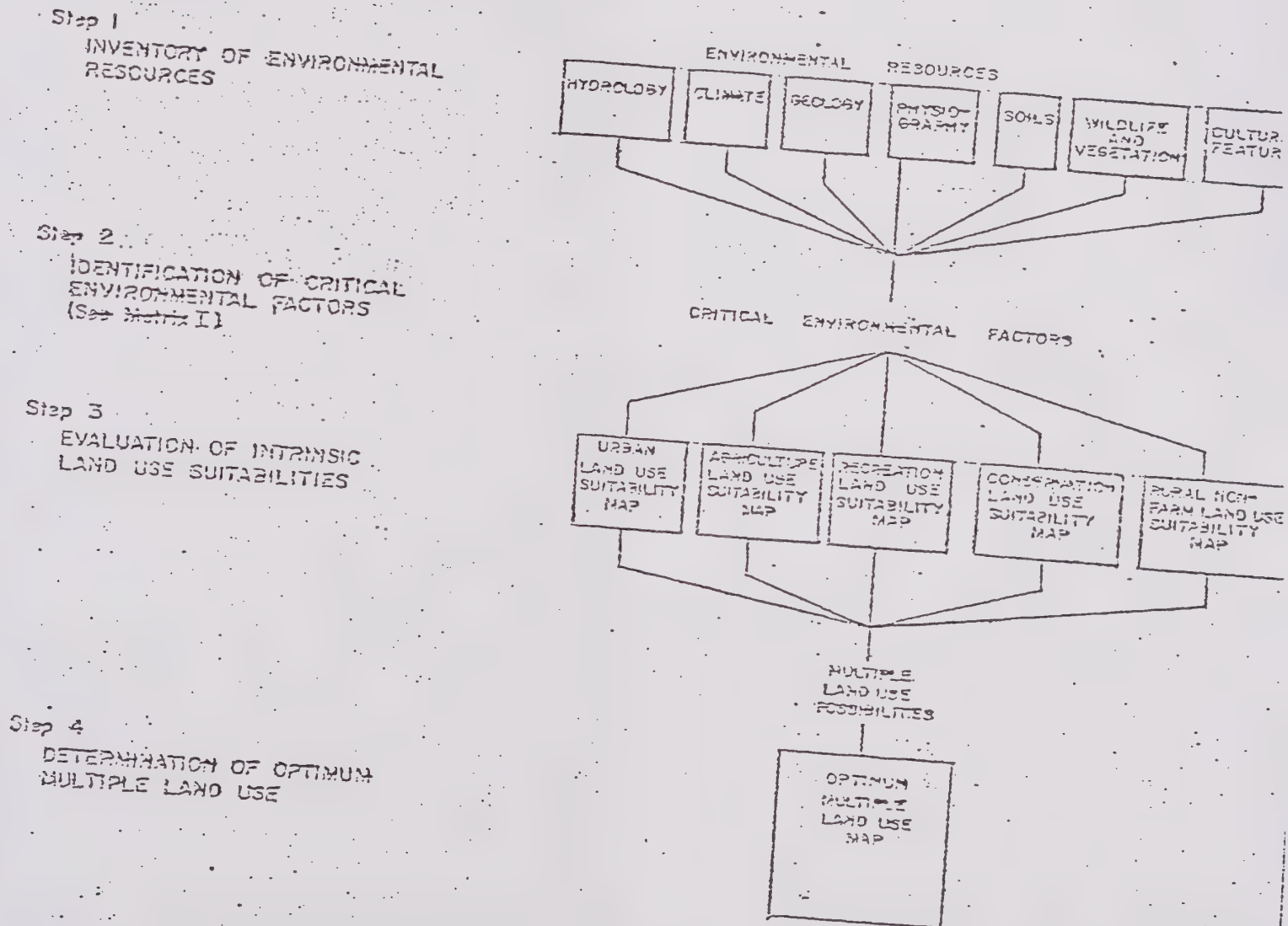
8. That Open Space Zoning and acquisition methods be used to conserve and protect the designated natural resources.

9. That the City support proper resource management and conservation measures by other jurisdictions within its generalized spheres of influence.





# LAND USE SUITABILITY SELECTION PROCESS



SOURCE: Merced City Planning Department  
ERP Report



# LAND USE / CRITICAL FACTOR COMPATIBILITY

## POTENTIAL LAND USES

Recreation	Agriculture	Rural Non-Farm	Urban	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Areas of Scenic Value
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wildlife Habitat
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Historic and Cultural Features
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Riparian Lands
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prime Agricultural Land <sup>1)</sup>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Susceptible to Flooding
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Aquifer Recharge
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Seismic Hazards <sup>2)</sup>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Noise Zone
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor Soil-Bearing Capacity
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unsuitable for Septic Tanks
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	High Erodibility
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor Surface Drainage
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	High Corrosivity
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Excessive Slope

Positive

Negative

## CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

### COMPATIBILITY

☒ High

☒ Moderate

☐ Low

1) Applied only in evaluating Agricultural suitability since limiting factors for other potential uses are independently considered.

2) See Seismic Element for a discussion of local seismic hazards.



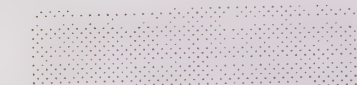


# LOS BANOS

MERCED COUNTY  
CALIFORNIA

## OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

Urban Reserve



Agriculture



Conservation



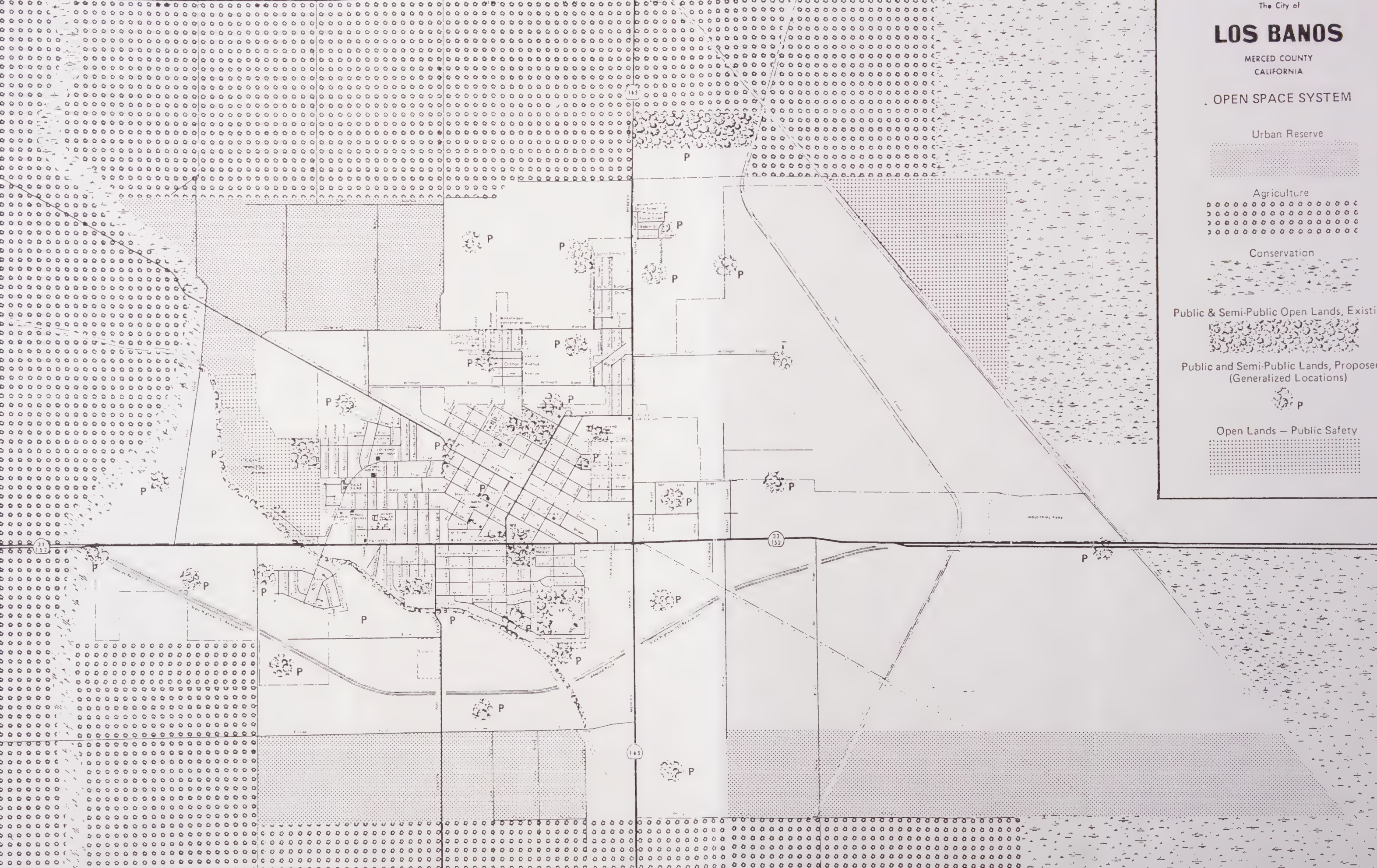
Public & Semi-Public Open Lands, Existing



Public and Semi-Public Lands, Proposed  
(Generalized Locations)



Open Lands — Public Safety







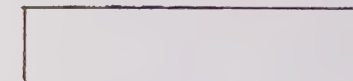
The City of

# LOS BANOS

MERCED COUNTY  
CALIFORNIA

## GENERALIZED HABITAT AREAS

Urban / Industrial



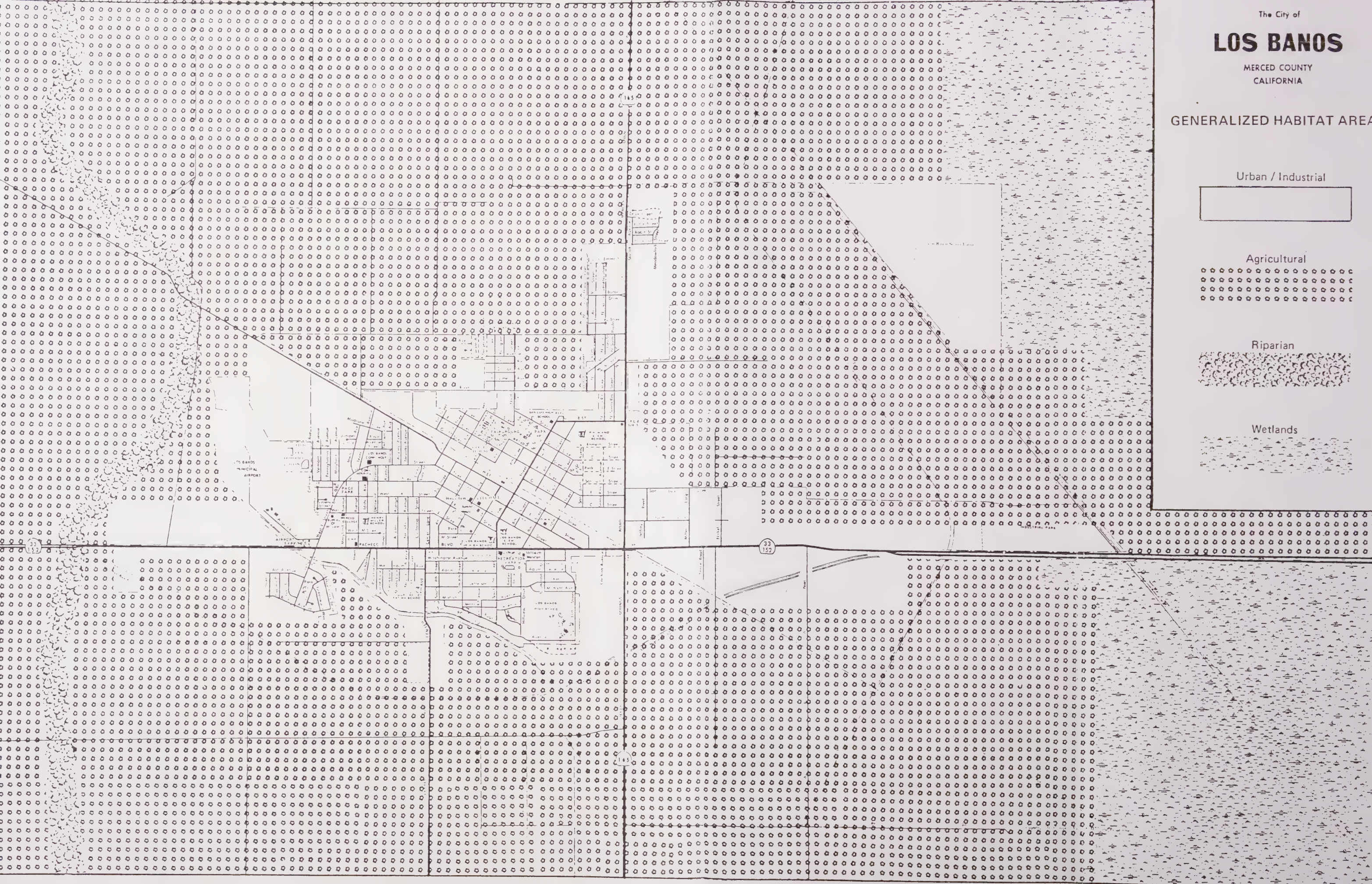
Agricultural



Riparian



Wetlands









# LOS BANOS

MERCED COUNTY  
CALIFORNIA

## GENERALIZED SOILS

### AGRICULTURAL SUITABILITY

Prime — Class I



Prime — Class II



Secondary — Class III



Secondary — Class IV







## OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

In the coming years the need for maintaining Open Space will play an increasing part in the development of the City and adjoining areas. Open Space areas are needed not only to aid in conserving natural resources and to maintain a quality environment, but also to provide opportunities for recreation and enhancement of human values in future years.

In response to the need for maintaining Open Space and Environmental Quality, the State Legislature has directed every city to prepare elements pertaining to Open Space and Conservation.

Open Space is not only established park land, but is more broadly defined as any parcel or area of land or water which is essentially unimproved and devoted to Open Space use, such as the following: 1) preservation of natural resources; 2) managed production; 3) outdoor recreation; 4) public health and safety.

Open Space should be considered as viable land use rather than an area for exploitation. It provides the community with such justifiable benefits as recreation, resource management, sensory relief, public safety and economic enhancement.

The Planning Area considered in this Element will be the same as described in the Conservation Element. Emphasis is again placed on the existing City Limits and the primary sphere of influence.

Lands identified as Open Space are not meant to be condemned for private use, but to provide the City at large with



proper resource management.

The Major Goal of the Open Space Element shall be to create, protect and preserve a system of Open Space which will serve the needs of all segments of the City's population and aid in regional conservation of natural resources.

SUPPORTING GOALS:

1. Provide ample outdoor recreational opportunities.

Policy: To establish a system of acquiring park and Open Space lands throughout the City, and continue to expand recreational facilities and cooperate with other jurisdictions in such activities.

2. Conserve natural resources, such as soil, agriculture, wildlife areas and other resources necessary for maintaining environmental quality.

Policy: To provide controls to allow for conservation of resources within the City and influence preservation of resource lands of the Planning Area.

3. Shaping and guiding development in order to achieve efficient growth and maintain community scale in growth and form.

Policy: To designate lands as Urban Reserve Open Space to prevent leapfrog development and to encourage efficient use of available City lands and services thereby establishing a phased growth pattern of the City for Urban expansion.

4. Preventing incompatible development of areas that should be preserved or regulated for natural, cultural, conservation or public safety purposes.

Policy: To review on a project-by-project basis the impact on the environment and to designate buffer areas of limited development to preserve these areas for the purpose they serve.





## OPEN SPACE SYSTEM:

An Open Space System is established to maintain the environmental quality of the City and to serve as a vehicle to conserve vital resources of the City.

1. Parks - to continue to maintain existing parkland and to acquire additional land for this purpose by available funds and through regulations governing development of new areas. Areas designated on the accompanying maps as proposed parkland are only generalized locations and their precise boundaries may deviate within these general areas of placement. It is suggested that an optimum of one (1) acre per one hundred (100) population be the goal of Open Space within the City. Suggested public Open Space areas are:

- a) A strip park along the C. C. I. D. Canal to be developed in phases with a larger nodule area to augment the development.
- b) Abandoned rail right-of-ways can serve as a nucleus for strip parks as indicated on the Plan connecting Los Banos Gardens to the Canal Strip Park, also along Second Street between "H" and "J".
- c) New neighborhood and expansion of existing parks in those areas which are park deficient, including those which have been indicated in original subdivision designs



and the Land Use Element.

- d) Using an abandoned dump site in the northern portion of the City which can be utilized as that area develops.
  - e) Also certain areas that can be used as temporary parks or connecting walkways or held in reserve for continuation of streets at the terminus of Seventh Street.
  - f) An eastern and far western entrance park to be created in conjunction with the development of the Route 152 By-Pass.
  - g) Continued examination should be given to a larger community Open Space Park or Golf Course.
  - h) Possible conversion of a portion or all of the existing City Dump for recreation purposes.
  - i) Creation of downtown Open Areas in conjunction with a revitalization of the downtown or a new or expanded Civic Center Complex.
2. Agriculture - to maintain prime agriculture lands within the Planning Area.
3. Conservation - lands designated to provide a buffer of limited development between intense urban uses and wildlife habitat areas. These areas should contain the less intense agricultural uses.





4. Urban Reserve - lands to be used for future development, but to remain essentially undeveloped at present to encourage regulated growth and efficient use of City services or under evaluation to be developed in a controlled manner preserving the Open Space characteristic. These areas should be reviewed in five (5) year periods.
5. Public Safety - areas to remain essentially open to enhance public safety and community facilities, such as, in and around waste disposal sites, airport areas, flood plains and unstable grounds.
6. Scenic Corridors - Areas designated in the future Scenic Highway Element to be maintained for transport routes having intrinsic scenic qualities.

OPEN SPACE MAP - The area North of Highway 152 and East of Santa Fe Grade Canal indicated as non-open land. However, it is not considered suitable for urban development but is to be designated as either agricultural or conservation.

#### APPLICATION OF OPEN SPACE CATEGORIES:

In its review of Open Space needs of the City, citizens advising the Planning Commission were of the consensus that the need for maintaining open lands, other than providing for public parkland, was not crucial. It was the opinion of the group that maximum flexibility in enhancing the growth of the City is needed and that maintaining open lands in the conservation categories within the primary sphere of influence could have a detrimental



effect in producing an economically viable and diversified city. However, it was concluded that private open lands - agricultural and conservation - should predominate in the surrounding area to maintain the rural atmosphere and aid in preserving natural resources.

#### IMPLEMENTATION:

The implementation of the Open Space/Conservation Element is to be accomplished by the following methods:

1. Open Space Zoning Ordinance - to provide for maintenance of Open Space lands while still allowing private use of the land.
2. Parkland Dedication - requiring subdividers to dedicate land for neighborhood parks and Open Space as well as providing funds for their development and/or acquisition of additional lands at a rate consistent with maintaining a community wide rate of open space of one (1) acre per one hundred (100) population.
3. Public acquisition of Open Space lands by using present and future fund resources.
4. When acquisition is not possible, lands should be developed in such a manner which will insure retention of significant areas of Open Space. This can be accomplished by encouraging subdivision designs and other developments which provide for open lands and landscaping projects.





5. Strict Environmental Quality Review of projects which can enable the City to provide for incompatible development in respect to Open Space lands.



C I T Y   O F   L O S   B A N O S

SAFETY ELEMENT  
OF THE  
GENERAL PLAN

Prepared by  
ALLAN NERELL  
Building Inspector  
October, 1974

Revised by  
MICHAEL W. ENSLEY  
Planning Director  
December, 1974

Adopted by  
CITY COUNCIL  
January 15, 1975





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## P R E F A C E

As a human being, man in general likes to content himself with the idea that he is in complete control of his environment. Periodically, however, man finds himself the victim of hazards found within his environment and it is at these times that man realizes just how powerless he can become.

Recognizing the danger to life and property represented by environmental hazards, the State of California has required that cities deal with this issue in their General Plans. Section 65302.1 of the State Administrative Code states concerning a Safety Element for the protection of community from fires and geologic hazards that:

The general plan shall also include, in addition to the elements specified in Section 65302, a safety element for the protection of the community from fires and geologic hazards including features necessary for such protection as evacuation routes, peak load water supply requirements, minimum road widths, clearances around structures, and geologic hazard mapping in areas of known geologic hazards.

As thus mandated by the State, the purpose of the Safety Element of the General Plan is to identify the specific hazards that may attack our environment, define an "acceptable risk" for each hazard, and establish a program that will gradually reduce the hazard or at the least provide for an effective response capability to deal with the hazards as they arise. Therefore, our first objective is to pinpoint the hazards pertinent to the City of Los Banos.





## T H E   H A Z A R D S

Each individual environment or locale contains certain hazards which stand out as major concerns for that community. It is imperative in writing a Safety Element of the General Plan that these primary secondary hazards be identified to enable the City to deal with threat to life or property represented by these hazards.

Specific hazards pertaining to the Los Banos environment which will be discussed in this Safety Element include the following:

FIRE: Fire constitutes a universal hazard common to almost all environments. Due to its sudden and random nature, considerable attention will be given to the fire hazard.

EARTHQUAKE: As outlined in the Seismic Element of the General Plan, Los Banos has experienced severe seismic activity in the past and must prepare to withstand the effects of this hazard in the future.

CRIME: Unfortunately, the same universal nature of fire applies also to crime. This hazard has the inherent ability to permeate any environment that includes man.

FLOOD: Although the Flood Hazard to the City of Los Banos has largely been mitigated by the construction of the Los Banos Detention Dam, damage to life and property is still a real possibility that must be dealt with in Los Banos.



Each of the hazards named above has been evaluated as objectively as possible by the City Building Inspector concerning the severity and frequency of each hazard. This analysis provides a means of determining which hazards present the greatest threat to the community. In order to compare all four hazards, the table shown below was compiled. Each hazard is listed in the left hand column and the characteristics to be evaluated are listed along the top. The numbers in each column represent each hazard's ranking on a scale from one to ten, one to five indicating poor to few, and six to ten representing good or frequent. The totals in the last column represent a summation of all the other columns which gives an indication of which hazards should receive the most attention.

COMPARISON OF HAZARDS

<u>HAZARD</u>	<u>PROBABLE FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE</u>	<u>POTENTIAL SEVERITY OF HAZARD</u>	<u>ESTIMATED ABILITY OF MAN TO PREVENT OR REDUCE FREQUENCY OF HAZARD</u>	<u>ESTIMATED ABILITY OF MAN TO SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCE THE IMPACT OF THE HAZARD</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Fire	8	8	7	9	32
Crime	10	1	8	9	28
Flood	2	4	9	10	25
Earthquake	2	10	0	6	18

From the last column, a ranking of the hazards based upon frequency of occurrence, severity, and man's ability to prevent or reduce the hazard can be deduced. The totals indi-



cate that for the City of Los Banos, the hazards rank as follows: Fire, Crime, Flood, and Earthquake. The Fire Hazard ranks number one because it occurs relatively often with potentially severe results, however it does lend itself to preventive measure to prevent or reduce the impact if the hazard does occur. Crime ranked second to Fire mainly because the impacts of specific crimes are usually confined to one person and as a result, crime does not carry as high a rating in the severity column as does Fire. While the Flood Hazard ranked third, little additional narrative will follow concerning the Flood Hazard because the hazard has largely been eliminated with the construction of the Los Banos Detention Dam as previously noted.

The Earthquake Hazard ranked last primarily because of of a low frequency of occurrence and a lack of ability on man's part to prevent the hazard. Even though the Earthquake Hazard was ranked last, considerable discussion will center around this hazard because of its high potential severity. Most of this discussion will center around emergency facilities and our ability to respond satisfactorily to this potentially most devastating of our hazards.

### T H E   F I R E   H A Z A R D

Since the beginning of civilization, man has adopted fire as his tool for cooking, warmth and power. In the vast majority of cases, fire has been a reliable, trustworthy servant catering to his master's wishes. However, on numerous occasions





this servant to man has risen above its position of servitude and demonstrated an inherent power to inflict destruction and death. It is this potential for indiscriminate destruction coupled with the fact that proven equipment, procedures, and policies are available to us to either prevent or greatly reduce the impact of fire that makes the Fire Hazard the number one priority for this Safety Element.

An evaluation of our present and future position concerning the Fire Hazard might best be approached from two directions. The first will be a discussion of preventive measures currently in effect and those additional measures that should be initiated. The second will be a discussion of our present and future response capabilities.

#### PREVENTATIVE MEASURES:

The City of Los Banos currently practices a number of fire prevention policies common to other cities of similar size. These policies include the following:

1. The adoption and enforcement of the latest editions of the Uniform Building Code, Uniform Mechanical Code, and the National Electrical Code by a full time Building Department.
2. The employment of a full time Fire Prevention Officer responsible for supplementing the Building Department's field of activity by providing periodic inspections of commercial and multi-family occupancies, grass and rubbish abatement programs and



systematic repair or abatement of substandard properties throughout the City.

3. Public information efforts conducted infrequently and primarily confined to posters and handout sheets depicting various fire hazards and their accompanying remedies.

Preventative measures that should be taken in the future are essentially the same as are currently in practice, but with added emphasis on public education. More effort should be put into informing the general public about the various fire hazards in our environment. Information can be disseminated through speaking engagements in the schools, service clubs, and weekly publications in the news media covering all aspects of fire safety.

The one important fact concerning fire prevention work that should be kept in mind in guiding the growth of the City is that the Building and Fire Departments must never be allowed to become inadequately staffed or undermanned and must always be kept in pace with the growth of the City. Experience has proven that a City which allows itself to become deficient in fire prevention personnel is setting the stage for an increased number of minor fires which have the potential to ignite a major conflaguration.

#### RESPONSE CAPABILITIES:

Regardless of how effective our fire prevention programs are, we are still going to experience a number of fires each year. The City's effectiveness in coping with these fires will depend





largely upon our response capabilities. Since man in general will probably continue to be careless in his use of fire and since our environment is being increasingly filled with either sources of ignition or flammable materials, it is of the utmost importance that we maintain response capabilities at the highest reasonable level.

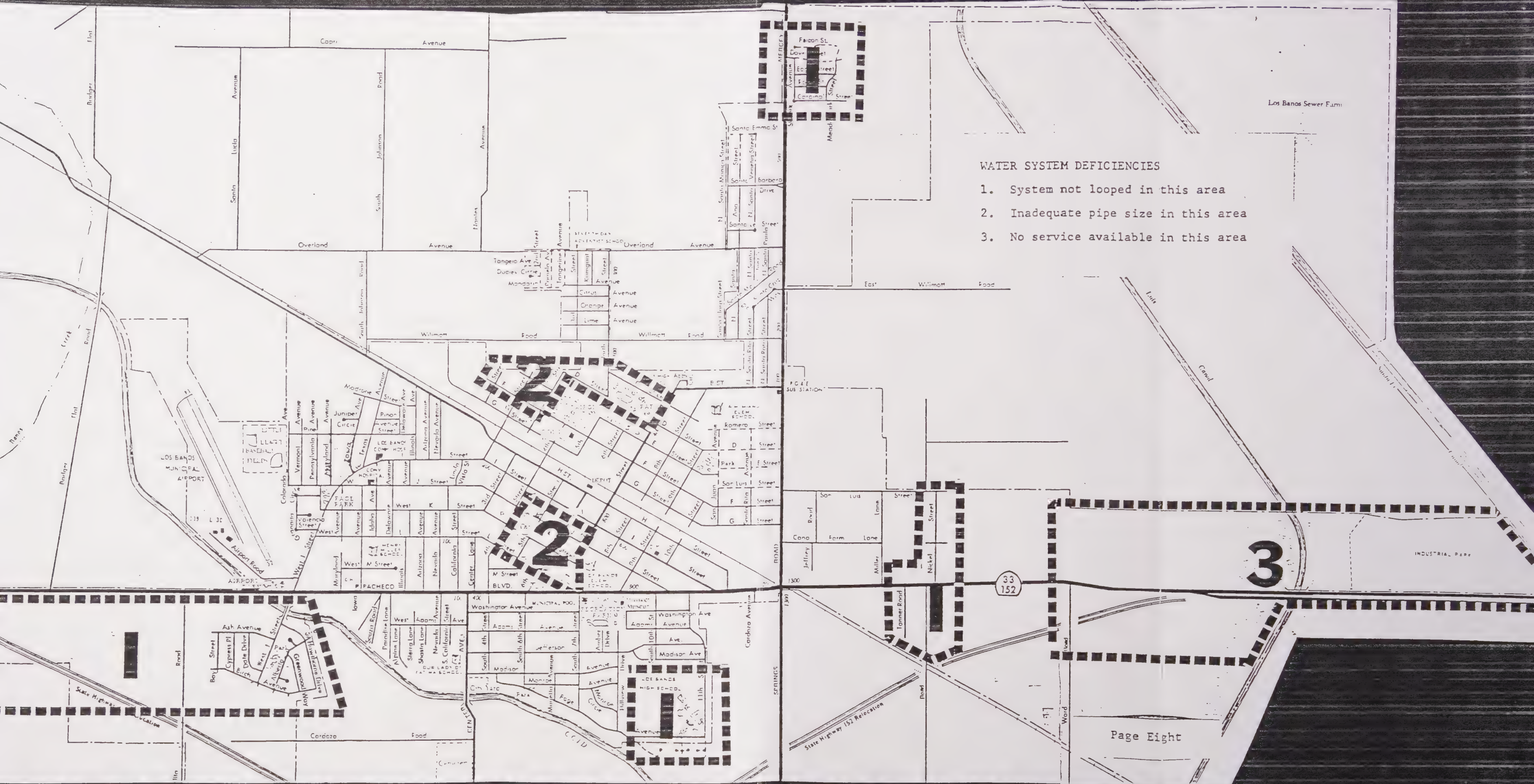
In order to respond to a fire in a reasonable manner three factors must be present. First, an adequate source of water at sufficient pressure and located near the fire is necessary. Secondly, the proper type and numbers of specific fire fighting equipment such as trucks, breathing apparatus and hand tools must be available. Thirdly, a sufficient number of men, properly trained to derive the full benefits from a good water supply and up to date equipment must be employed. The following paragraphs attempt to describe how the City presently is meeting these demands and how they will be met in the future.

There is probably no one thing that is more important to effective fire fighting than an adequate water supply. Properly sized water lines forming a completely looped water distribution system and backed by a permanent, reliable source of water is the backbone of a response to a fire emergency. Unfortunately, the City of Los Banos has a number of deficiencies in its water system that prohibits it from being described as completely adequate for either present or future fire fighting requirements.

One aspect of the Water System that is deficient is that of Distribution. As the map on the next page indicates, various







WATER SYSTEM DEFICIENCIES

1. System not looped in this area
2. Inadequate pipe size in this area
3. No service available in this area





parts of the City are served by very old, four inch (4") diameter cast iron pipes that would be inadequate to meet the water demands of a major fire. One such area is that of "J", "K", and "L" Streets, between Fourth and Seventh Streets. The major problem in this area lies in the fact the majority of the fire hydrants are connected to four inch (4") lines which create a high head loss when large flows are required at the fire hydrants.

In addition, due largely to leapfrog development in the past, many of the outlying areas of the City have only one water source which is not looped back into another part of the Water System. This condition greatly reduces the volume of water that can be delivered to these areas.

Another area of the water system that is deficient is that of water supply. During the summer months when water consumption is at its peak, reserve storage capacity is taxed to the limit in order to meet the everyday water demands. This means that the existing system operates at capacity during the summer months with no reserve to fight a major fire. This situation is potentially critical if a major fire should occur at a time when one or more wells is inoperative due to mechanical or electrical problems.

The problem of well failure mentioned above points out another major deficiency in the water system, namely, the lack of emergency stand-by power for wells. Only one well in our present system, Well No. 1 at the City Corporation Yard, is equipped to run without electrical power from Pacific Gas and Electric. How-





ever, this well will only produce about one hundred (100) gallons per minute and its standby equipment is deficient in a number of characteristics which make it unreliable in an emergency.

The description of the existing water system and its deficiencies point out a number of things that must be done in the near future to develop a system satisfactory for fire safety. The City Fire Department, Engineers, and Public Works Superintendent concur that the improvements stated below are vital to the public safety of the City:

1. The City water supply must be increased.
2. Water lines in selected areas presently served by only one line should be looped into another part of the water system.
3. A new eight-inch (8") water line should be installed in Fifth Street to service fire hydrants in the area and eliminate high head loss.
4. An eight-inch (8") to ten-inch (10") line on Page Avenue between Eleventh Street and Hillview Drive is needed to tie into the existing service at the High School to insure sufficient capacity to protect that facility.
5. The Water System should be expanded to include those areas in the City not serviced by the existing system.

Obviously, because of the costs involved, all of the items listed above cannot be corrected immediately. The City of Los Banos has, however, already started to implement a phased improvement program that will accomplish the desired upgrading of the water system over a period of five (5) to seven (7) years. One of the first phases of this Program is the construction of a new well equipped with emergency standby power and a thorough



study of the total water system by the City Engineering firm of Stoddard and Associates.

In addition to the water supply, access for emergency vehicles is an extremely important consideration for the safety of people and property in the City. Being centrally located, emergency services in Los Banos are readily accessible with possible two exceptions: The Davis Tract and Citrus Terrace.

The problem in the Davis Tract stems from the fact that Santa Cruz Way and Santa Maria Road are built on a diagonal to other streets in the subdivision and no access is provided between the two. If an emergency vehicle is not routed exactly to the correct address, several blocks must be traversed to reach a location only one (1) block distant.

Access to the Citrus Terrace area is hampered by the railroad tracks and fairgrounds, both of which pose as barriers. In solving this problem the City has, at the recommendation of the Fire Department, amended its Select Street System to include the extension of Second Street from "E" Street to Overland Avenue. This amendment may enable federal funding to finance the extension of Second Street, thus providing emergency access.

The Select System also has been amended to extend Seventh Street from "B" Street to Overland Avenue. The intersecting of Seventh Street with Santa Maria Road would greatly improve access to the Davis Tract area.

The next area of fire response capability we should look at is that of fire fighting equipment. Presently, the City





of Los Banos' fire fighting equipment consists of four (4) pumper trucks, one (1) auxiliary truck, plus numerous small pieces of equipment such as face masks, portable power plants, and similar emergency equipment.

This equipment is considered adequate for most emergencies at present for the following reasons:

1. The water supply, rather than the emergency equipment, would be the limiting factor in most fires. In other words, the present pumpers have the ability to pump more water than the Water System can supply.
2. Very few buildings in Los Banos exceed two (2) stories in height. Therefore, the existing trucks provide firemen with adequate access to the existing buildings.
3. Most of the new large commercial/industrial buildings constructed in recent years have been installed with automatic fire protection systems. However, it should be noted that the City Water System does not have the capability, in some instances, to apply sufficient water to operate some of the automatic fire protection systems at their designed flow.

Existing equipment must be considered in view of the fact that the City's newest one thousand two hundred fifty (1,250) gallon pumper is now six years old and the next newest seven hundred fifty (750) gallons per minute truck (No. 3) is nineteen years old. Truck No. 5 was purchased second-hand from Division of Forestry in 1948 and is a 1941 model but has been reconditioned and works well. The reserve unit, No. 2, is thirty seven years old, having been purchased in 1938, and the No. 1 Unit, the City's pride and joy, is still operating after fifty two years of service. The State Board of Underwriters generally consider the life of a



pumper to be twenty years under top maintenance conditions.

Looking to the future, the Fire Department is of the opinion that acquisition of an aerial pumper/snorkel truck should not be seriously considered until such time as the department is a fully paid department. The reasoning for this is based on the fact that such a unit requires continuous training. However, it is fully recognized that in large single and two-story buildings, commercial or apartment, an aerial truck would quickly prove its worth.

The last area of fire response capability concerns manpower. The present City Fire Department consists of thirty one (31) volunteers operating out of one centrally located fire station. This Volunteer Department has maintained a consistently high level of performance and "esprit de corp" which is expected to continue for many years to come. Because the Fire Department is a voluntary one, it is composed of men from throughout the community representing all types of trades and occupations. This is an advantage in many types of fires because it gives the Fire Department its own "in house" experts to handle most any situation.

Eventually, the present Volunteer Fire Department will probably be forced to turn either to a partial paid-partial volunteer department or to a full-time paid department. This change will come about when either the length of runs to fires or the population of the City reach an unacceptable level.

In addition to the thirty one volunteer City firemen, it must also be realized that County firefighting personnel and



equipment are also located in Los Banos at 525 "H" Street. The County facility employs eight men, two of whom are continually on duty, and has available three firefighting units, one rescue unit, a boat, and a jeep. A joint telephone system enables the County Department to respond simultaneously to all fire calls received by the City Fire Department.

Additional fire assistance is also available through the State Division of Forestry, which has facilities located at 24320 Hwy 152. During the fire season, which runs from May to November, the Forestry Station employs generally seventeen personnel consisting of one ranger, two captains, two fire apparatus engineers, two heavy equipment operators, and ten fire fighters. During the non-fire season of December through April only the ranger, captains, and engineers are retained. The Forestry Station is equipped primarily with two fire trucks and one bulldozer. An informal mutual aid agreement is operative between the Forestry unit and the City whereby the Forestry units will cover the City Fire Station or assist on City fires when requested to do so.

### T H E   E A R T H Q U A K E   H A Z A R D

The background and history of earthquakes in the Los Banos area has already been presented in some detail in the Seismic Element. It is sufficient to say at this time that the City of Los Banos has experienced severe seismic activity in the past and will therefore probably experience more activity in the future.





In order to meet this earthquake challenge, most of the preventative measures and response capabilities, present and future, that were described under the Fire Hazard also apply to the Earthquake Hazard. Specifically:

1. Replacement of those old four inch (4") cast iron water distribution lines which are not suited for domestic use.
2. All water lines looped back into other portions of the water system.
3. Addition of new wells to the system to bolster the available water supply.
4. Provide emergency standby power for all new and existing wells to ensure continuous water supply even during a massive power failure which may accompany a major earthquake.

Of these four items, the emergency standby power for our wells is probably the most critical for our City's earthquake preparedness. Without an adequate water supply following a major earthquake, fires could run unchecked through the City and proper sanitation and health measures would be hampered. The City has taken preventive measures since 1926 to insure that damage to one part of the water network will not destroy the utility of the entire system. These measures specifically entail the isolation of City blocks on the water system by shut-off valves. These valves are typically four hundred fifty feet (450') apart and enable the system to be maintained with less inconvenience to the public by allowing each block to be individually isolated. Only one major exception exists to this plan, a ten-inch (10") water main running from the City Corporation Yard down Fourth Street



between Madison Avenue and "D" Street.

In addition to the items described above, a brief review of the types of construction found in our existing building stock will establish a general overview of the City showing which areas, due to their types of construction, will likely suffer the most damage as a result of a severe earthquake. By studying this construction picture, and comparing it with the water deficiency map presented earlier, a priority plan for upgrading our earthquake preparedness facilities can be developed.

The construction map on page 17 gives an overall view of the types of construction found in the various parts of the City. The dark area on the map represents the area of town that has the types of construction that have proven themselves to be structurally unreliable during severe earthquake activity. The predominant type of construction in this area is one and two story unreinforced brick buildings housing the majority of the City's downtown retail businesses. The balance of the City is predominately one-story-wood-frame buildings that are known to have excellent earthquake resistive characteristics.

It is apparent from the construction map that the downtown business district will probably receive the bulk of the destruction caused by an earthquake. Because of this, it is imperative that the City develop a policy governing the continued use and occupancy of the buildings in the downtown area that are expected to perform poorly in a severe earthquake. This policy could range from the extreme in which a massive program of demo-





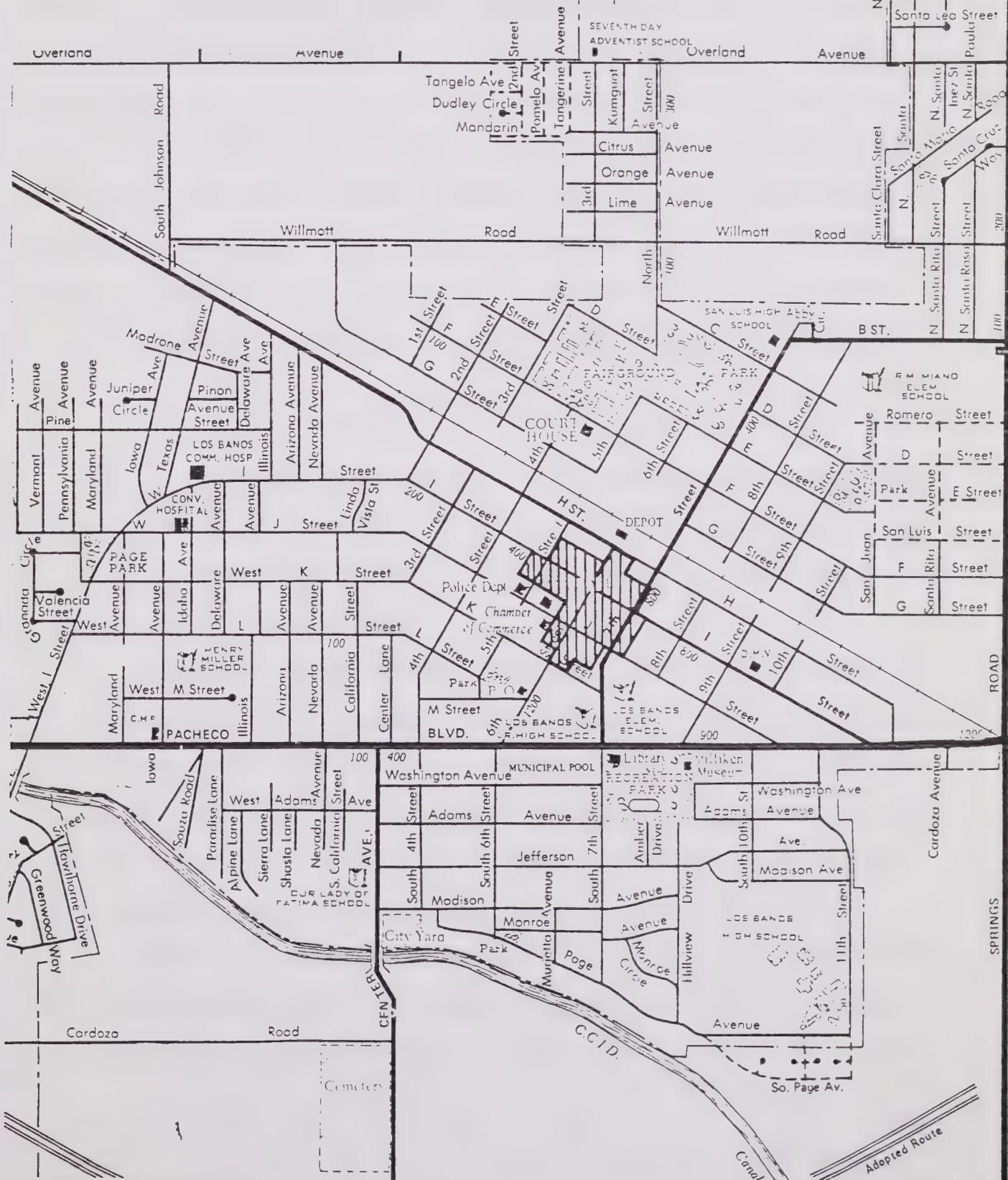
# AREAS SUSCEPTIBLE TO SEISMIC DAMAGE



Highly susceptible to earthquake damage



Earthquake resistant





lition and reconstruction would be initiated, to one of "Laissez-Faire". Probably the most sensible policy for the City to follow would be one that sought the middle of the two extremes described above. In other words, permit the continued use of the existing buildings but through the use of Zoning and Building Code enforcement, limit the use of the buildings to only those occupancies that have a relatively low twenty four hour human occupancy rate, such as the existing retail stores, and gradually upgrade the structural integrity of the older buildings as the opportunity arises. In this policy, there will, of course, be times when demolition is the only feasible avenue for the City to take.

#### T H E   C R I M E   H A Z A R D

As pointed out earlier, crimes are an inherent part of man's environment. In fact, to many people in many parts of our country, crime is the paramount hazard far outdistancing any other hazard as to severity.

Because of its rural, small town nature, Los Banos has not experienced the frequency of magnitude of crime that larger cities have experienced. The City is growing however, and with this growth has come an increasing trend for Los Banos to experience all of the criminal acts that the larger urban areas have had to contend with for some time albeit on a small scale.

Over the years to cope with the changing crime picture the City has attempted to enlarge and maintain its Police force at a level adequate to provide for the needs of the City. The



current Police Department consists of twenty six (26) full time personnel, with five (5) additional reserve officers. This Department is well staffed and properly equipped and the City Management has demonstrated a real interest in continuing this level of service.

The City of Los Banos is also served by the Merced County Sheriff's Department which houses fifteen Deputy Sheriffs and maintains ten patrol cars. The Sheriff's facility is currently located at 945 Fifth Street in the same building with the City's Police Department. A mutual aid agreement exists between the Police Department and Sheriff's Department enabling each to assist the other in time of extreme emergency.

Mention should also be made of Los Banos' unique crime prevention Youth Assistance Program. This Early Intervention Program consists of one licensed family and youth counselor and three professional counselors. The program, funded through a CCCJ Grant, has received national recognition and could provide valuable assistance in administering a major disaster.

In addition to personnel, equipment and programs utilized to combat crime, the Safety Element should more specifically address itself to improved land use methods designed to reduce crime or at least make the job of the Police Department easier. The two methods that are easily adapted to Los Banos and which should definitely be incorporated in all future planning and site-plan review decisions are:

1. The use of security lighting to reduce or





discourage criminal activity.

2. The use of open space and site design to create "defensible space" to discourage criminal activity.
3. The strategic location of public buildings and urban renewal projects to upgrade crime prone areas.

The first one of these methods, that of security lighting, has already been used to some extent by the City. Most areas of the City have street lighting which provides not only vehicular safety but also illuminates areas around buildings thus reducing the number of dark areas that could contribute to criminal activity. All of the City-owned buildings are equipped with security lighting both inside and out which provides protection against criminal activity for both the City property and the neighboring properties.

To further enhance the use of security lighting throughout the City, all site plan reviews conducted on new commercial and residential construction should specifically look for and demand adequate security lighting. By attacking the crime hazard from this direction, the safety and security of the individual's property is enhanced and the job of the patrolling police officer is made much easier.

The second and third methods for reducing crime hazards in Los Banos are the use of open space and public buildings to provide security zones around homes and buildings that might be subjected to criminal activity. Public buildings tend to be large and often involve large open areas which are well lighted



and patrolled regularly by the Police Department. Also, these types of building by their very nature generate substantial amounts of traffic and "people activity" which is in itself a deterrent to the criminal element.

By locating these public buildings with their accompanying open spaces in various parts of the City, central security-zones can be established which can serve as the focal point for new construction surrounding them. This would provide the residents of the area surrounding the public building with not only the advantage of ready access to use of the building, but also the advantage of being able to share in the built-in security of the Public Building and Open Space.

### T H E   F L O O D   H A Z A R D

The last hazard to be discussed in this Safety Element is the Flood Hazard. Although at first glance it would seem to the uninformed that flooding would be one of the least likely things that could happen to a town located in an arid valley with an average rainfall of approximately eight inches (8"). In the past, however, Los Banos has experienced a flooding problem which at its worst necessitated the use of sandbags to prevent the severe inundation of the City.

A brief look at the City's present storm drainage system indicates that it is designed to handle water from a two-year storm and that any storm whose rainfall is in excess of a two-year storm will create localized flooding within the City of Los Banos.





The extent and duration of this flooding will depend on the amount of precipitation contributed by the storm. If, for example, a five-year storm or a storm that we might expect only once every five years occurs, we will certainly have localized flooding of streets, perhaps even some flood water would be present on the sidewalk. If the precipitation is such that a storm would be classified as a storm that only occurs once every ten years the flooding would be greater and would probably last for a longer period of time. No study that we are aware of has been made of the amount of runoff or the extent of the flooding that would occur from various standard design storms.

Most flooding in Los Banos has been caused by overflows of the Los Banos Creek as a result of tremendous runoff from the foothill watershed. This condition has been largely alleviated by the installation of the Los Banos Detention Dam. This thirty four thousand five hundred (34,500) acre-foot reservoir holds back potential flood waters during peak run-off periods and discharges them over longer periods of time.

Although the year to year flooding hazard has been eliminated by the Dam construction, there are still two physical occurrences that could cause flooding to once again occur in Los Banos. The first of these is a severe prolonged storm occurring late in the winter after the reservoir had reached capacity. An extremely hard rain at this time of year could force the Detention Dam into discharging large amounts of water in order to keep abreast of the run-off from the watershed. This discharge could



conceivably reach flood stage at which time the City of Los Banos would be threatened with flooding. However, it should be noted that this eventuality is remote, according to the Department of Water Resources, because of their draw-down plan which keeps the top fourteen to fifteen thousand acre feet capacity of the reservoir available for flood storage between September and May. This is done in accordance with the Corps of Engineers flood regulations and is to assure that capacity is available to absorb potential flood waters from winter rains and spring snow thaws.

The second occurrence that could cause considerable short term flooding in the City is a major earthquake. Both the Los Banos Detention Dam and the two million acre foot San Luis Dam are earth filled dams. If an extremely severe earthquake were to occur with its epicenter near these dams, there is a possibility of dam failure. Such a failure in the Los Banos Detention Dam would cause a tremendous discharge of water down the Los Banos Creek waterway. The waterway would be unable to handle this discharge and local short-term flooding would occur.

A failure of the San Luis Dam could result in a major discharge of water from Pacheco Pass. However, because of the distance (eleven (11) miles) between Los Banos and the Dam, and the general topography of the intervening land, it is unlikely that the City of Los Banos would experience any type of extreme destruction that the immediate area below the Dam would surely receive. There is the real possibility however of less severe flooding occurring as a result of heavy inundation of adjacent



water courses and canals. (For more detailed information on this subject see the Seismic Safety Element of the General Plan.)

The State Department of Emergency Services has been required by legislation to prepare inundation maps indicating those areas throughout the state which would be prone to flooding during periods of extreme runoff. Inundation maps for the San Luis Reservoir, O'Neill Forebay, and Los Banos Reservoir have been requested but as yet are unprepared. When completed these maps will be included as an integral part of the City's Safety Elements.

#### C O N C L U S I O N

The fire, earthquake, crime and flood hazards are not the only hazards that are present in the environment of the citizens of Los Banos but they are the hazards that the people of Los Banos can deal with and reduce on a day to day effort using current tried and proven methods and equipment. By following the recommendations and programs outlined in the foregoing Safety Element, significant improvements can be made in our ability to cope with these hazards and make Los Banos a safer place in which to live.





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NOISE ELEMENT OF THE  
GENERAL PLAN  
LOS BANOS, CALIFORNIA

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Authority

The contents of a Noise Element and the methods used in its preparation have been determined by the requirements of Section 65302 (f) of the California Government Code and by the "Guidelines for the Preparation and Content of Noise Elements of the General Plan" adopted and published by the California Office of Noise Control (ONC) in 1976. The ONC Guidelines require that certain major noise sources and areas containing noise-sensitive land uses be identified and quantified by preparing generalized noise exposure contours for current and projected conditions within the community. Contours may be prepared in terms of either the Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) or the Day-Night Average Level ( $L_{dn}$ ), which are descriptors of total noise exposure at a given location for an annual average day. CNEL and  $L_{dn}$  are generally considered to be equivalent descriptors of the community noise environment within plus or minus 1.0 dB. Section 1.5 provides an explanation of the acoustical terminology used in this document.

#### 1.2 Purpose and Scope

It is intended that the noise exposure information developed for the Noise Element be incorporated into the General Plan to serve as a basis for achieving land use compatibility within the City. It is also intended that the noise exposure information developed for the Noise Element be used to provide baseline levels for use in the development and enforcement of a local noise control ordinance to address noise levels generated by non-preempted noise sources within the City.

According to the Government Code requirements for Noise Elements and to the ONC Guidelines, the following major noise sources should be considered in the preparation of a Noise Element:

1. Highways and freeways
2. Primary arterials and major local streets
3. Railroad operations





4. Aircraft and airport operations
5. Local industrial facilities
6. Other stationary sources

Noise-sensitive areas to be considered in the Noise Element should include areas containing the following noise-sensitive land uses:

1. Schools
2. Hospitals
3. Rest homes
4. Long-term medical or mental care facilities
5. Other uses deemed noise sensitive by the local jurisdiction, such as residential uses.

### 1.3 Relationship to Other Elements of the General Plan

The Noise Element is most related to the Land Use and Circulation Elements of the General Plan. Its relationship to the Land Use Element is direct in that the implementation of either element has the potential to result in the creation or elimination of a noise conflict with respect to differing land uses. The Land Use Element must be consistent with the Noise Element in discouraging the development of incompatible adjacent land uses to prevent impacts upon noise-sensitive uses and to prevent encroachment upon existing noise-generating facilities.

The Circulation Element is linked to the Noise Element in that traffic routing and volume directly affect community noise exposure. For example, increased traffic volume may produce increased noise in a residential area so that noise control measures are required to provide an acceptable noise environment. Similarly, re-routing traffic from a noise-impacted neighborhood may provide significant noise relief to that area. Implementation of the Circulation Element should include consideration of potential noise effects.

### 1.4 Noise And Its Effects On People

Noise is often defined simply as unwanted sound, and thus is a subjective reaction to characteristics of a physical phenomenon. The descriptors of community noise in current use are the results of many years of effort to translate objective measurements of sound into measures of subjective reaction to noise. Before elaborating on these descriptors, it is useful to discuss some fundamental concepts of sound.



Sound is defined as any pressure variation in air that the human ear can detect. If the pressure variations occur frequently enough (at least 20 times per second), they can be heard and hence are called sound. The number of pressure variations per second is called the frequency of sound, and is expressed as cycles per second, now called Hertz (Hz) by international agreement.

The speed of sound in air is approximately 770 miles per hour, or 1,130 feet/second. Knowing the speed and frequency of a sound, one may calculate its wavelength, the physical distance in air from one compression of the atmosphere to the next. An understanding of wavelength is useful in evaluating the effectiveness of physical noise control devices such as mufflers or barriers, which depend upon either absorbing or blocking sound waves to reduce sound levels.

To measure sound directly in terms of pressure would require a very large and awkward range of numbers. To avoid this, the decibel (dB) scale was devised.

The decibel scale uses the hearing threshold as a point of reference, defined as 0 dB. Other sound pressures are then compared to the reference pressure, and the logarithm is taken to keep the numbers in a practical range. Use of the decibel scale allows a million-fold increase in pressure to be expressed as 120 dB. Another useful aspect of the decibel scale is that changes in levels (dB) correspond closely to human perception of relative loudness.

The perceived loudness of sounds is dependent upon many factors, including sound pressure level and frequency content. In the range of usual environmental noise levels, perception of loudness is relatively predictable, and can be approximated by weighting the frequency response of a sound level measurement device (called a sound level meter) by means of the standardized A-weighting network. There is a strong correlation between A-weighted sound levels (expressed as dBA) and community response to noise. For this reason, the A-weighted sound level has become the standard tool of environmental noise assessment. Figure 1 illustrates typical A-weighted sound levels due to recognizable sources.

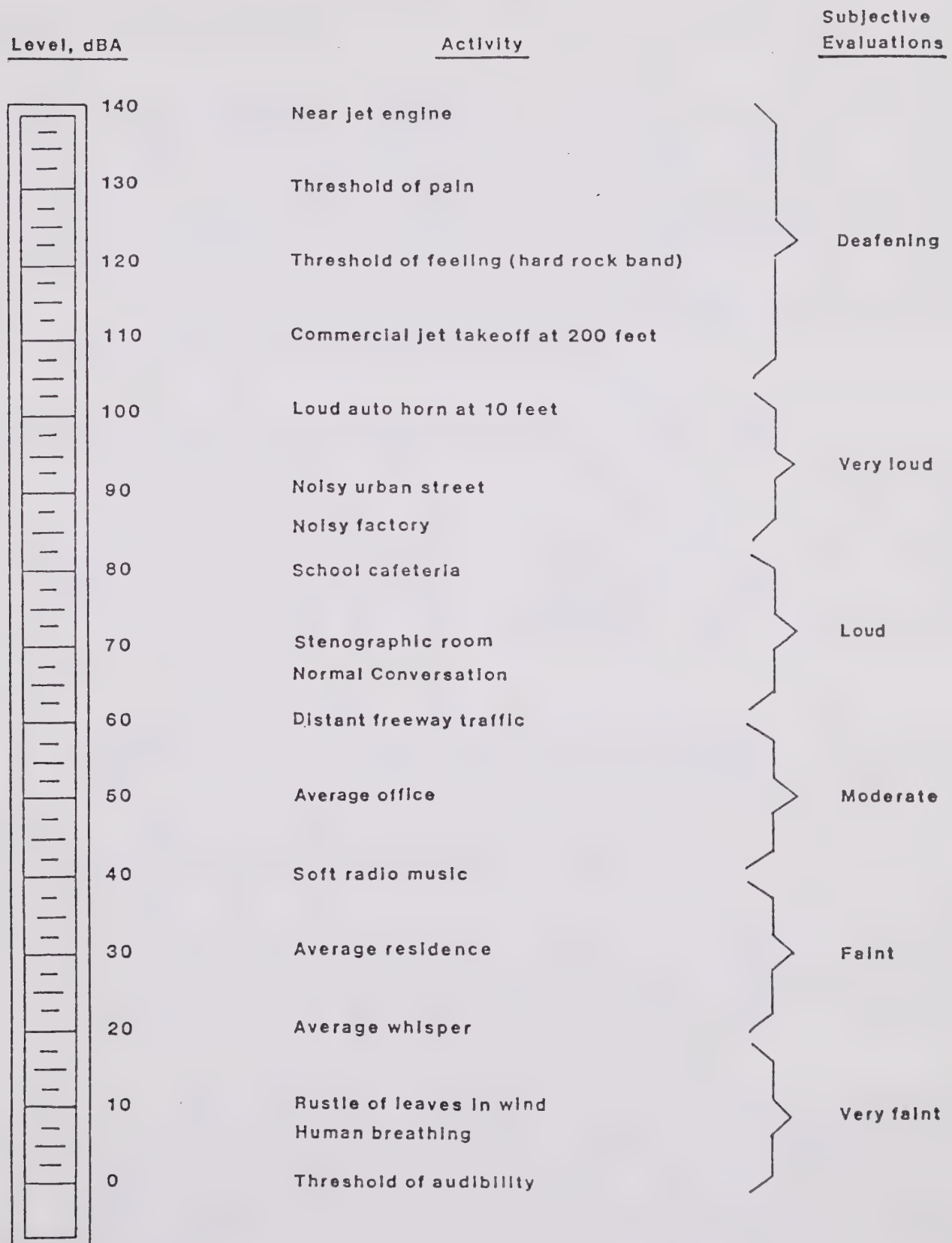
It is common to describe community noise in terms of the "ambient" noise level, which is defined as the all-encompassing noise level associated with a given noise environment. A common statistical tool to measure the ambient noise level is the average, or equivalent, sound level ( $L_{eq}$ ), which is the sound level corresponding to a steady-state A-weighted sound level containing





# FIGURE 1

## Examples of Noise Levels



Source: M. David Egan, FAA data

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the same total energy as a time-varying signal over a given time period (usually one hour). The  $L_{eq}$  is the foundation of the composite noise descriptors such as  $L_{dn}$  and CNEL, and shows very good correlation with community response to noise.

Two composite noise descriptors are in common use today:  $L_{dn}$  and CNEL. The  $L_{dn}$  (day-night average level) is based upon the average hourly  $L_{eq}$  over a 24-hour day, with a +10 decibel weighting applied to nighttime (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.)  $L_{eq}$  values. The nighttime penalty is based upon the assumption that people react to nighttime noise exposures as though they were subjectively twice as loud as daytime exposures. The CNEL (Community Noise Equivalent Level), like  $L_{dn}$ , is also based upon the weighted average hourly  $L_{eq}$  over a 24-hour day, except that an additional 4.77 decibel penalty is applied to evening (7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.) hourly  $L_{eq}$  values.

The CNEL was developed for the California Airport Noise Regulations, and is applied specifically to airport/aircraft noise assessment. The  $L_{dn}$  scale is a simplification of the CNEL concept, but the two will usually agree, for a given situation, within 1 dB. Like the  $L_{eq}$ , these descriptors are also averages and tend to disguise variations in the noise environment. Because  $L_{dn}$  and CNEL presume increased evening or nighttime sensitivity, they are best applied as criteria for land uses where nighttime noise exposures are critical to the acceptability of the noise environment, such as residential developments.

Noise in the community has often been cited as being a health problem, not in terms of actual physiological damage, such as hearing impairment, but in terms of inhibiting general well-being and contributing to undue stress and annoyance. The health effects of noise in the community arise from the interference with human activities such as sleep, speech, recreation, and tasks demanding concentration or coordination. When community noise interferes with human activities or contributes to stress, public annoyance with the noise source increases, and the acceptability of the environment for people decreases. This decrease in acceptability and the threat to public well-being is the basis for land use planning policies directed towards the prevention of exposure to excessive community noise levels.

To control noise from existing fixed sources many jurisdictions have adopted community noise control ordinances. Such ordinances are intended to abate noise nuisances and to control noise from existing sources. They may also be used as planning tools if applied to the potential creation of a nuisance, or to potential encroachment of sensitive uses upon noise-producing facilities.



Community noise control ordinances are generally designed to resolve noise problems on a short-term basis (usually by means of hourly noise level criteria), rather than on the basis of 24-hour or annual cumulative noise exposures.

### 1.5 Criteria For Acceptable Noise Exposures

The State Office of Noise Control (ONC) "Guidelines for the Preparation and Content of Noise Elements of the General Plan", include recommended exterior and interior noise level standards for local jurisdictions to identify and prevent the creation of incompatible land uses due to noise. The ONC guidelines contain a land use compatibility table which describes the compatibility of different land uses with a range of environmental noise levels in terms of  $L_{dn}$  or CNEL. A noise environment of 50 to 60 dB  $L_{dn}$  or CNEL is considered to be "normally acceptable" for residential uses according to those guidelines. The ONC recommendations also note that, under certain conditions, more restrictive standards may be appropriate. As an example, the standards for quiet suburban and rural communities may be reduced by 5 to 10 dBA to reflect lower existing outdoor noise levels.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) also prepared guidelines for community noise exposure in the publication "Information on the Levels of Environmental Noise Requisite to Protect Public Health and Welfare with an Adequate Margin of Safety". These guidelines are based upon assumptions regarding acceptable noise levels which consider occupational noise exposure as well as noise exposure in the home. The guidelines recognize an exterior noise level of 55 dB  $L_{dn}$  as a goal to protect the public from hearing loss, activity interference, sleep disturbance and annoyance. The EPA notes, however, that this level is not a regulatory goal, but is a level defined by a negotiated scientific consensus without concern for economic and technological feasibility or the needs and desires of any particular community. The EPA and other governmental agencies have adopted suggested land use compatibility guidelines which indicate that residential noise exposures of 55 to 65 dB  $L_{dn}$  are within acceptable limits.

For control of noise nuisances, a community noise control ordinance is the most appropriate tool. The State Office of Noise Control has prepared a Model Community Noise Control Ordinance which contains recommended noise standards in terms of "time-weighted" levels in dBA. The time-weighting concept allows discrimination of both short- and long-term noise exposures, and sets allowable levels for each. The Model recommends more stringent standards for residential land uses than for commercial and industrial,





with the most stringent standards recommended for "rural suburban" situations. The primary noise standard for rural residential uses is 50 dBA in the daytime hours (7 a.m. to 10 p.m.), and 40 dBA at night. The standard is expressed in terms of the level exceeded for 30 minutes of an hour, equivalent to the median level, or L50. This ordinance format is successfully applied in many California cities and counties.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has also prepared a Model Community Noise Control Ordinance using the "Equivalent A-weighted Sound Level" ( $L_{eq}$ ) as the means of defining allowable noise level limits. The EPA model contains no specific recommendations for local noise level standards, but reports a range of  $L_{eq}$  values as adopted by various local jurisdictions. The mean daytime noise standard reported by the EPA is 56.75 dBA ( $L_{eq}$ ); the mean nighttime noise standard is 51.76 dBA ( $L_{eq}$ ). This ordinance format has been successfully applied by the City and County of San Diego.

In addition to the A-weighted noise level, other factors should be considered in establishing criteria for noise sensitive land uses. For example, sounds with noticeable tonal content such as whistles, horns, or droning or high-pitched sounds may be more annoying than the A-weighted sound level alone will suggest. Many noise standards apply a penalty, or correction, of 5 dBA to such sounds. The effects of unusual tonal content will generally be more of a concern at nighttime, when residents may notice the sound in contrast to previously-experienced background noise.

Because many rural residential areas experience very low noise levels, residents may express concern about the loss of "peace and quiet" due to the introduction of a sound which was not audible previously. In very quiet environments, the introduction of virtually any change in local activities will cause an increase in noise levels. A change in noise level and the relative loss of "peace and quiet" is the inevitable result of land use or activity changes in such areas. Audibility of a new noise source and/or increases in noise levels within recognized acceptable limits are not usually considered to be significant noise impacts, but these concerns should be addressed and considered in the planning and environmental review processes.

Table 1 is commonly used to show expected public reaction to changes in environmental noise levels. This table was developed on the basis of test subjects' reactions to changes in the levels of steady-state pure tones or broad-band noise, or to changes in levels of a given noise source. It is probably most applicable to noise levels in the range of 50 to 70 dBA, the usual range of voice and interior noise levels. It is probably not directly applicable to public perception of identifiable intrusive noise sources in very quiet environments because of the difference in frequency content between



background noise sources and intrusive sounds, as well as the fact that the absolute amount of energy required to make a given change in sound pressure level is much smaller at low noise levels than at higher levels. Table I should therefore only be applied in a general manner to show the relationship between changes in sound energy, sound pressure levels and subjective reaction.

The comparisons of subjective reaction outlined in Table I are not applicable to noise exposures which are very quiet or very loud. For example, a whisper which is increased by 10 decibels, e.g., from 20 dBA to 30 dBA, remains a whisper, and would still be described as quiet. In contrast, an increase in the noise level of a diesel locomotive from 90 dBA to 100 dBA would be a change from a loud noise to a very loud noise. Thus the subjective reaction to a 10 dBA change in either case may be different, even though the change in level is the same.

TABLE I

SUBJECTIVE REACTION TO CHANGES IN NOISE LEVELS OF SIMILAR SOURCES

Change in Sound Pressure Level, dBA	Relative Increase In Acoustical Energy	Subjective Reaction
*****		
1	1.26 times	Minimum Detectable Change (Lab)
3	2.0 times	Usually Noticeable Change
5	3.2 times	Definitely Noticeable Change
10	10.0 times	Twice (or half) as Loud as Before

Sources: Various, reported by Brown-Buntin Associates, Inc.





## 1.6 Acoustical Terminology

Because a substantial amount of noise-specific nomenclature and terminology is used throughout the remaining text of this document, definitions of key acoustical terminology are provided to facilitate review, understanding and utilization of the City's Noise Element:

- "Ambient noise level" means the composite of noise from all sources near and far. In this context it represents the normal or existing level of environmental noise at a given location for a specific time of the day or night.
- "A weighted sound level" means the sound level in decibels as measured with a sound level meter using the "A" weighted network (scale) at slow meter response. The unit of measurement is referred to herein as dBA.
- "CNEL" means Community Noise Equivalent Level. The average equivalent A-weighted sound level during a 24-hour day, obtained after addition of five decibels to sound levels in the evening from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. and after addition of ten decibels to sound levels in the night before 7:00 a.m. and after 10:00 p.m.
- "Decibel, dB" means a unit for describing the amplitude of sound, equal to 20 times the logarithm to the base 10 of the ratio of the pressure of the sound measured to the reference pressure, which is 20 micropascals (20 micronewtons per square meter).
- "Equivalent Energy Level,  $L_{eq}$ " means the sound level corresponding to a steady state sound level containing the same total energy as a time varying signal over a given sample period.  $L_{eq}$  is typically computed over 1, 8 and 24-hour sample periods.
- "Impulsive Noise" means a noise of short duration, usually less than one second, with an abrupt onset and rapid decay.
- " $L_{dn}$ " means Day/Night Average Level. The average equivalent A-weighted sound level during a 24-hour day, obtained after addition of ten decibels to sound levels in the night before 7:00 a.m. and after 10:00 p.m.
- " $L_{max}$ " means the maximum A-weighted noise level recorded during a noise event.



- "Noise Exposure Contours" Lines drawn about a noise source indicating constant energy levels of noise exposure. CNEL and  $L_{dn}$  are the descriptors utilized herein to describe community exposure to noise.
- "Preempted Noise Source" means a noise source which cannot be regulated by the local jurisdiction due to existing State or federal regulations already applying to the source. Examples of such sources are vehicles operated on public roadways, railroad operations and aircraft operations.
- "Pure Tone Noise" means any noise which is distinctly audible as a single pitch (frequency) or set of pitches. For the purposes of this ordinance, a pure tone shall exist if the one-third octave band sound pressure level in the band with the tone exceeds the arithmetic average of the sound pressure levels of the two contiguous one-third octave bands by 5 dB for center frequencies of 500 Hz and above and by 8 dB for center frequencies between 160 and 400 Hz and 15 dB for center frequencies less than or equal to 125 Hz.

## CHAPTER TWO

### EXISTING AND FUTURE NOISE ENVIRONMENT

#### 2.1 Overview of Sources

Based on discussions with City of Los Banos staff and field studies conducted during the preparation of the Noise Element, it was determined that there are a number of potentially significant sources of community noise within the City of Los Banos. These sources include traffic on State highways and major City streets, railroad operations, airport operations, industrial facilities and agricultural packing activities. Specific noise sources selected for study are discussed in the following sections.

#### 2.2 Methods and Noise Exposure Map

Analytical noise modeling techniques in conjunction with actual field noise level measurements were used to develop generalized  $L_{dn}$  or CNEL contours for major sources of noise within the City of Los Banos for existing (1986) and future (2005) conditions.



Analytical noise modeling techniques generally make use of source-specific data including average levels of activity, hours of operation, seasonal fluctuations, and average levels of noise from source operations. Analytical methods have been developed for many environmental noise sources including roadways, railroad line operations, railroad yard operations, industrial plants and aircraft/airport operations. Such methods will produce reliable results as long as data inputs and assumptions are valid for the sources being studied. The analytical methods used in this report closely follow recommendations made by the State Office of Noise Control, and were supplemented where appropriate by field-measured noise level data to account for local conditions.

Noise exposure contours for major sources of noise within the City of Los Banos are shown in Figure 2. It should be noted that the  $L_{dn}$  or CNEL contours shown in Figure 2 or described in the text are generally based upon annual average conditions (unless otherwise noted), and are not intended to be site-specific where local topography, vegetation or intervening structures may significantly affect noise exposure at a particular location. It is intended that Figure 2 be used by the City of Los Banos during the implementation of the Noise Element through the project review and long range planning processes.

### 2.3 State Highways and Major City Streets

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Highway Traffic Noise Prediction Model (FHWA-RD-77-108) was used to develop  $L_{dn}$  contours for the State highways and major City streets within the study area. The FHWA Model is the analytical method presently favored for traffic noise prediction by most state and local agencies, including Caltrans. The FHWA Model is based upon reference energy emission levels for automobiles, medium trucks (2 axles) and heavy trucks, (3 axles or greater) with consideration given to vehicle volume, speed, roadway configuration, distance to the receiver and the acoustical characteristics of the site. The FHWA Model was developed to predict hourly  $L_{eq}$  values for free-flowing traffic conditions, and is generally considered to be accurate within plus or minus 1.5 dB. To predict  $L_{dn}$  values, it is necessary to determine the hourly distribution of traffic for a typical 24-hour day and to adjust the traffic volume input data to yield an equivalent hourly traffic volume. Experience with the use of the FHWA Model has indicated that for most roadways the model generally overpredicts traffic noise exposure by 1-2 dB in areas 100-200 feet from the center of the roadway, and that its use will generally result in a conservative estimate of traffic noise exposure.





# CITY OF LOS BANOS MERCED - COUNTY CALIFORNIA

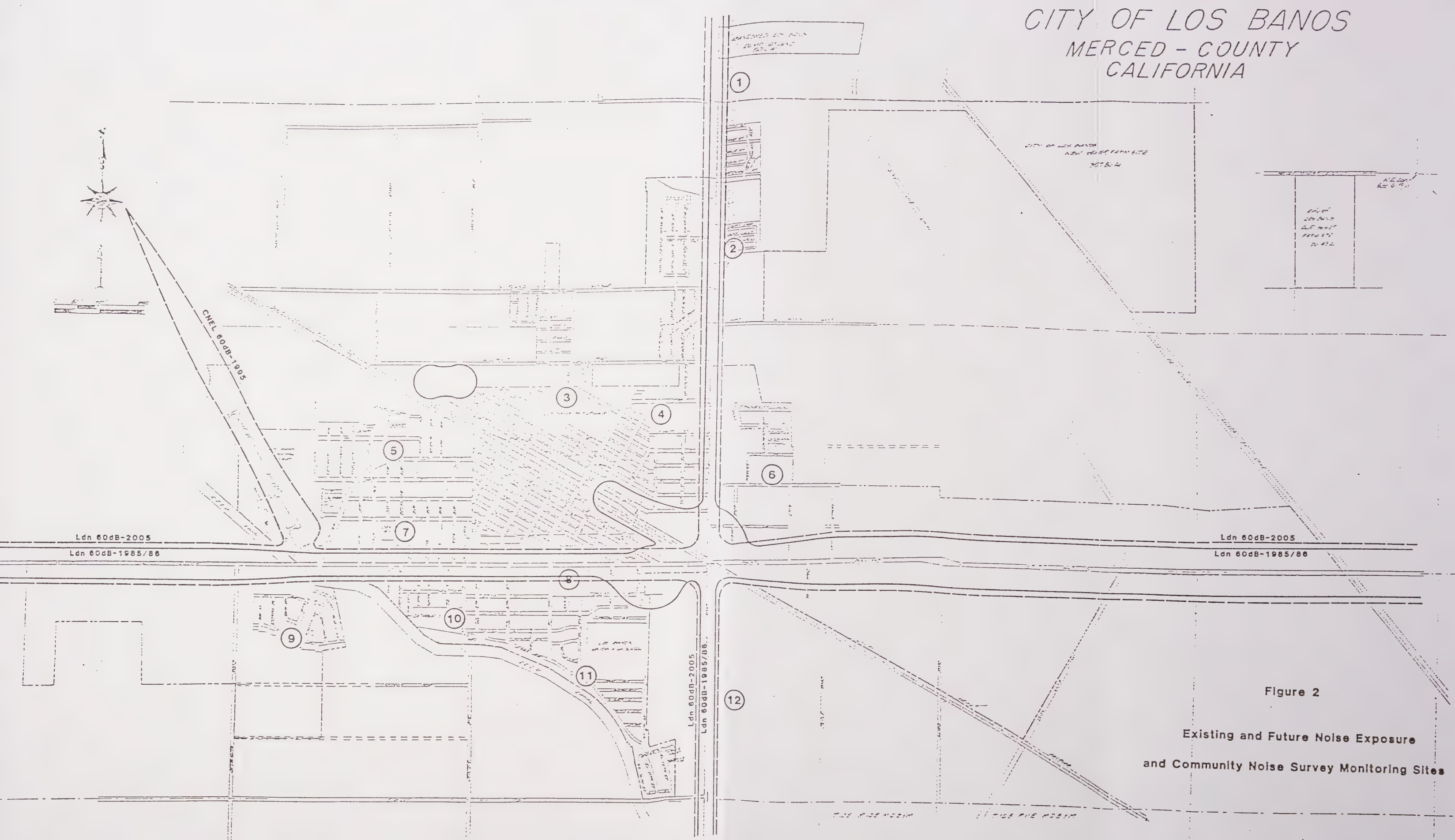


Figure 2

Existing and Future Noise Exposure  
and Community Noise Survey Monitoring Sites



Traffic data representing annual average traffic volumes, truck mix and the day/night traffic distribution for existing and future conditions were obtained from Caltrans and the City of Los Banos. These data, along with the FHWA Model were used to calculate the distance between the center of roadways and the 65 and 60 dB  $L_{dn}$  contours for existing (1985/86) and projected future (2005) traffic conditions. Traffic data and calculated distances to  $L_{dn}$  contours are summarized in Table II. The approximate locations of the 60 dB  $L_{dn}$  contours for existing and projected future traffic conditions are shown in Figure 2 for roadways where the 60 dB  $L_{dn}$  contour extends beyond the roadway right-of-way. It should be noted that since calculations did not take into consideration shielding caused by local buildings or topographical features, the distances reported in Table II and depicted in Figure 2 should be considered as worst-case estimates of noise exposure along roadways in the community. Noise exposure behind the first row of houses or other types of buildings along a roadway will typically be reduced by 5-15 dB.

#### 2.4 Southern Pacific Transportation Company

Railroad operations within the City of Los Banos are composed of through-freight and local switching operations on the Southern Pacific Transportation Company line which generally runs through town in an east-west direction north of the downtown area. According to the Chief Dispatcher's office in Tracy, (Reference 1), the average number of railroad operations through Los Banos for a typical week is one southbound train three times per week, and one northbound train three times per week. Trains generally run during the daytime (7:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.) hours, although trains are sometimes later during the peak fruit packing season. Trains are usually composed of one or two locomotives with approximately 20-40 cars. Average speed is 25-30 miles-per-hour. Railroad operations are not expected to change significantly within the foreseeable future.

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Reference 1. Chief Dispatcher's Office, Southern Pacific Transportation Co., Tracy, California, telephone interview, October 15, 1986.





TRAFFIC AND NOISE LEVEL DATA  
STATE HIGHWAYS AND MAJOR LOCAL STREETS  
LOS BANOS, CALIFORNIA

Roadway Description	Distance to L <sub>dn</sub> contours, Feet									
	AADT		D/N Split	%MT	%HT	Speed	1985/86		2005	
	1985/86	2005					65 dB	60 dB	65 dB	60 dB
Pacheco Boulevard (SR 152)										
West of SR 165 (35 mph)	14,700	22,500	87/13	2.2	7.1	35 MPH	116	250	157	337
West of SR 165 (45 mph)	14,700	22,500	87/13	2.2	7.1	45 MPH	154	331	208	448
East of SR 165 (45 mph)	10,500	21,900	87/13	2.8	10.4	45 MPH	152	327	192	444
East of SR 165 (55 mph)	10,500	21,900	87/13	2.8	10.4	55 MPH	247	533	314	676
Mercey Springs Rd. (SR 165)										
North of SR 152 (45 mph)	5,800	14,100	86/14	2.3	2.9	45 MPH	62	133	112	241
North of SR 152 (55 mph)	5,800	14,100	86/14	2.3	2.9	55 MPH	75	162	149	321
South of SR 152 (45 mph)	2,450	5,500	86/14	4.1	6.6	45 MPH	49	106	63	137
South of SR 152 (55 mph)	2,450	5,500	86/14	4.1	6.6	55 MPH	84	181	109	234
Pioneer Road										
(West of CCID Canal)	854	2,100*	90/10	2.0	0.5	35 MPH	7	15	13	28
Overland Avenue (W. of SR 165)	1,358	3,400*	90/10	2.0	0.5	40 MPH	12	26	23	49
Willmott Road (W. of SR 165)	798	2,000*	90/10	2.0	0.5	25 MPH	4	9	7	16
Seventh Street (N. of "H")	5,858	14,600*	90/10	2.0	0.5	30 MPH	20	43	37	80
B Street (W. of SR 165)	1,833	4,600*	90/10	2.0	0.5	30 MPH	9	20	17	37

\*Based upon an annual growth rate of 5.0%

HT= Heavy Truck (3 axles or greater)

MT= Medium Truck (2 axles or greater)

Sources: Brown-Buntin Associates, Inc.  
City of Los Banos  
Caltrans



Railroad noise measurements were conducted in Los Banos on September 3, 1986 near the 4th Street grade crossing to obtain noise level data for typical railroad operations in the community. Noise levels were measured at a distance of approximately 100 feet from the center of the tracks. During the measurements, a southbound (eastbound) train dropped its cars north of the grade crossing to complete switching movements at local industrial sites throughout town. Later, the locomotives returned to pick up the rest of the train and to proceed southbound through town. The train consisted of 2 locomotives and 43 cars. The maximum noise level measured for the train's horn was 102 dBA. Maximum noise levels for the locomotives and cars ranged from 70-90 dBA. The Sound Exposure Level (SEL) for the train passby was 109.2 dB. In terms of  $L_{dn}$ , noise levels from railroad operations in the community are relatively insignificant (less than 60 dB at 100 feet) due to their low speed, time of day and infrequent occurrence. For this reason, a  $L_{dn}$  60 dB contour for railroad operations has not been shown in Figure 2. Noise levels from individual train movements (especially the horn) would be expected to result in significant short-term impacts on residents located near the tracks.

## 2.5 Los Banos Municipal Airport

The Los Banos Municipal Airport is located near the western edge of town. The airport consists of a single 3000 foot long runway. Aircraft operations generally occur in a south to north direction on Runway 32. A Master Plan completed for the airport in 1975 by Wadell Engineering Corporation for the planning period of 1975-1995 indicated that by the year 1985 annual aircraft operations would equal approximately 22,700. Of these, approximately 21,200 would be operations by single engine aircraft. By the year 1995, annual aircraft operations at the airport are expected to equal approximately 28,000. According to the Airport Manager (Reference 2), existing annual aircraft operations are somewhat less than forecasted by the Master Plan, indicating that the projected number of aircraft operations may be used to provide a conservative estimate of aircraft noise exposure in the community. Presently, there are two fixed base operators (FBO's) at the airport which provide fuel and aircraft maintenance services. Both of these FBO's repair and service aerial application aircraft (crop dusters) which are the noisiest aircraft which use the airport. In order to minimize noise impacts on the community from these aircraft, operations are permitted only during the daylight hours. Also, aerial application aircraft are not allowed to transport chemical loads

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Reference 2. Mr. Culley E. Polehn, Planning Director, City of Los Banos, personal interview, July 9, 1986.





from the airport, and operations by such aircraft are generally confined to aircraft servicing and the occasional application of seed or fertilizer.

Complaints received from local citizens concerning aircraft operations have generally arisen as the result of aircraft making their final turn and approach to Runway 32 over the Los Banos Gardens subdivision south of the airport. Noise levels from such operations could be reduced by recommending to pilots who frequently use the facility to make an extended downwind approach to Runway 32 with their final turn occurring south of the subdivision. There have been some complaints from persons residing east of the airport who receive a sideline exposure to departing aircraft. Such impacts may be minimized by not allowing the future development of noise sensitive land uses in this vicinity without proper noise mitigation in the form of noise barriers (effective only when the aircraft is on or near the ground) or acoustical treatment of buildings. Impacts may also be reduced by restricting operations by noisier aircraft types to the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. when most persons are not trying to sleep.

CNEL contours were prepared for the Los Banos Municipal Airport as part of the 1975 Master Plan. Since the Master Plan contours did not include a 60 dB CNEL contour, the FAA's Integrated Noise Model (INM) was used to prepare updated noise contours for the airport based upon the projected number of aircraft operations for 1995 from the Master Plan. Assumptions used during the preparation of the updated CNEL contours included an estimated fleet mix of 90% single engine, 7% twin-engine and 3% aerial application aircraft operations. It was also assumed that approximately 90% of all aircraft operations occur to the northwest on Runway 32, and that 75% of operations occur between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., that 20% occur between 7:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. and that 5% occur between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. The above assumptions are based upon Reference 3. The 60 dB CNEL contour for estimated 1995 operations is shown in Figure 2. If operations at the airport increase more rapidly than forecast by the Master Plan, or if the aircraft fleet changes significantly due to airport improvements or other factors, the CNEL contours shown in Figure 2 should be revised. As previously noted, CNEL and  $L_{dn}$  are generally considered to be equivalent descriptors of the community noise environment within plus or minus approximately 1.0 dB. The CNEL descriptor is required by California Administrative Code Title 21 for the evaluation of aircraft/airport noise exposure in California.

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Reference 3. Mr. Bill Brown, Mid Valley Aviation, Los Banos Municipal Airport, Telephone interview on February 12, 1987.





Based upon the present runway size, it is unlikely that jet or heavy turbo prop aircraft would utilize this facility with any regularity. An exception to this would be the smaller corporate jets weighing approximately 12,500 pounds or less with the newer turbo-fan engines. An example of such an aircraft is the Cessna Citation series, which are very quiet when compared to many of the older corporate jet aircraft and even some single or twin-engine propeller aircraft. It is important to note that maximum noise levels resulting from aircraft single events are generally more indicative of how a community perceives the airport noise exposure issue than time-weighted average descriptors such as CNEL. For this reason it is recommended that long range planning efforts be directed at minimizing noise-sensitive land uses in the vicinity of the airport.

## 2.6 Industrial and Other Stationary Noise Sources

The production of noise is an inherent part of many industrial processes, even when the best available noise control technology is applied. Noise production with an industrial facility is controlled indirectly by Federal and State employee health and safety regulations (OSHA and Cal-OSHA), but exterior noise emissions from industrial operations have the potential to exceed locally acceptable standards at noise sensitive land uses.

Industrial noise control issues focus upon two objectives: to prevent the introduction of new noise-producing uses in a noise sensitive area, and to prevent encroachment of noise-sensitive land uses upon existing industrial facilities or other stationary noise sources. The first objective can be achieved by applying performance standards to proposed new industrial uses or other stationary noise sources. The second objective can be met by requiring that new noise sensitive uses in proximity to existing noise sources include receiver-based mitigation measures to ensure compliance with the same performance standards.

Noise exposure information for local industries and other stationary noise sources was developed from operational data obtained from plant operators, and from noise level data obtained during the preparation of the Noise Element at reference locations around the plants. Consistent with the  $L_{dn}$  methodology, a 10 dB penalty was added to noise levels occurring at night (10:00 p.m. - 7:00 a.m.) where nighttime operations occur. In discussing future operations with plant operators it was readily apparent that too many variables exist to allow meaningful projections of future activity or noise levels. It is recommended that detailed studies of current source operations and noise levels be conducted whenever potentially noise-sensitive land uses are proposed for areas near existing industrial or commercial facilities.



The following descriptions of industrial or other stationary noise sources in Los Banos are intended to be representative of the relative noise impacts of such uses, and to identify specific noise sources which should be considered in the review of development proposals in their environs. It is probable that other unidentified sources exist within the City which could generate significant noise levels and which could result in noise-related land use conflicts. Generalized 60 dB  $L_{dn}$  contours have been prepared for the industrial or other stationary sources identified for study. Such contours have been shown in Figure 2 when noise exposure exceeding 60 dB  $L_{dn}$  extends beyond the property occupied by the source. It is intended that the generalized contours shown in Figure 2 be used as a screening device by the City of Los Banos to determine when site specific studies are required to prevent future land use conflicts.

#### NAAM Packing Co., Inc.

The NAAM Packing Co., Inc. packing shed is located on the south side of G Street between 8th and 9th Streets. There are residential and commercial properties located on the north side of G Street opposite the packing shed. Cantaloups are packed at this packing shed, which is typically in operation from late June to mid-October. The peak season occurs during about two weeks in July. For most of the season, a single work shift is used, running from about 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. or later. During the peak season, two shifts are run, from 8:00 a.m. to as late as 5:00 a.m. The primary noise sources associated with this operation are idling trucks, truck-mounted refrigeration units, and the packing shed machinery. Noise measurements were conducted on September 9, 1986 at a reference location approximately 85 feet from the packing machinery. The average noise level at this location was 65 dBA. Based upon this noise level and the above-described hours of operations, the 60 dB  $L_{dn}$  contour for peak season operations is located at approximately 400 feet from the shed. Due to shielding provided by the building in an easterly and westerly direction from the machinery, the 60 dB  $L_{dn}$  contour in these directions is located at approximately 200 feet from the shed. The generalized 60 dB  $L_{dn}$  contour is shown in Figure 2.

Source: Ms. Mary Petroni, Office Manager, NAAM Packing Co., Inc., personal interview on September 3, 1986.





### Ranchero Packing Co., Inc.

The Ranchero Packing shed is used by Ranchero Packing and Lindemann Farms, Inc. for packing honeydew melons and cantaloupes. The properties opposite the plant on the north side of G Street are industrial uses. The operating season for this operation is July through September, and occasionally into October. Work shifts are typically from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. during the packing season. The primary noise sources are medium trucks delivering melons to the packing shed, and heavy trucks loading melons from the Ranchero Packing Co., Inc. cold storage warehouse. Noise contours shown in Figure 2 have been prepared to represent the peak season noise level in terms of  $L_{dn}$  for the packing shed machinery only.

Source: Office Manager, Ranchero Packing Co., Inc. personal interview on September 4, 1986.

### A & F Farms

This is presently a cold storage facility used during the peak melon season (July-September). All packing is done in the field. The primary noise sources are heavy trucks and truck-mounted refrigeration units operating on the street, as they wait for access to the loading area.

Source: Wanda Young, Office Manager, A & F Farms, telephone interview on October 17, 1986.

### Lindemann Farms, Inc.

Lindemann Farms Inc. packs cantaloupes during the months of July through September and sometimes into October, depending upon growing conditions. The packing shed runs from approximately 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. during this time. The truck shipping area is open 24 hrs/day. Major sources of noise include truck-mounted refrigeration units, idling trucks and stationary refrigeration units associated with the cold storage facility. Approximately 50 trucks/day are loaded during the peak season. The packing machinery is enclosed partially within a building and generates noise levels of approximately 60-62 dBA along G Street north of facility. The cold storage refrigeration equipment in conjunction with truck-mounted refrigeration units generates noise levels of approximately 68-71 dBA on the east side of Mercey Springs Road across from the truck loading and cold storage area. A generalized 60 dB  $L_{dn}$  contour based upon noise levels measured during the September 3-4, 1986



study period and peak season hours of operation is shown in Figure 2. It is recommended that new developments of noise-sensitive land uses not be permitted by the City of Los Banos in close proximity of this facility unless a site-specific study is prepared to evaluate potential noise impacts and mitigation measures.

Source: Mr. Dennis Brazil, Plant Engineer, Lindemann Farms, telephone interview, October 17, 1986.

### San Joaquin Valley Dairymen

This is a food processing plant located southeast of the intersection of Pacheco Boulevard and South Eleventh Street. The plant operates 24/hrs/day and 365 days/year. Major stationary noise sources associated with the plant include 2 evaporators and a cooling tower. The smaller of the 2 evaporators (Rogers) vents steam to the outside of the plant for approximately 30 minutes upon startup. The sound of the escaping steam is audible on the south, east and west sides of the plant. Mobile sources of noise include trucks delivering raw milk or picking up finished products. Truck access is from Pacheco Boulevard. Noise measurements were conducted at a number of locations around the plant on September 3 and 4, 1986. Measured noise levels varied from a high of 62 dBA near Washington Avenue and South Eleventh Street to a low of 47 dBA near Madison Avenue and South Eleventh Street. Predominant sources of noise as measured in the community surrounding the plant were the cooling tower and exhaust stacks for the evaporators. Low frequency noise was audible in areas surrounding the plant and has reportedly resulted in complaints from nearby residents. A generalized 60 dB  $L_{dn}$  contour based upon the measurements obtained during the study period and the reported hours of operation is shown in Figure 2. It is recommended that future developments of noise sensitive land uses not be allowed in close proximity to this source without a detailed study of potential noise exposure and mitigation measures, including the consideration of noise with significant low frequency content.

Source: Mr. John D. Aalberts, General Manager, San Joaquin Valley Dairymen, personal interview on September 4, 1986.

### A & A Transport Company, Inc.

The A & A Transport Co., Inc. operations consists of a general hauling (trucking) operation, public scale, cold storage facility and receiving (agricultural inspection) station. During the peak season (generally the end





of June to the end of October), approximately 100 trucks come and go from the 33 acre site. The facility is open 24 hrs/day during the peak season and 7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. during the rest of the year. Major sources of noise consist of heavy trucks moving through the public scales, cold storage area, receiving station and terminal area, and the operation of the refrigeration equipment associated with the cold storage facility. Some noise-sensitive land uses are located along Place Road on the west side of the cold storage facility. In order to reduce noise exposure in this area from the cold storage facility, a noise barrier has been constructed. Since the cold storage facility was not operational at the time of the field survey (September 1-4, 1986), it was not possible to obtain noise level data for this facility. It is recommended that a site-specific study of potential noise impacts and mitigation measures be conducted if new noise-sensitive land uses are proposed in close proximity to this facility to minimize future noise-related land use conflicts.

Source: Ms. Polly Mogliolo, A & A Transport Co., Inc., telephone interview, October 16, 1986.

#### P.G. & E. Substation

The P.G. & E. electrical substation located near the intersection of East B Street and Mercey Springs Road operates 24-hours/day and 365 days/year. Noise level measurements conducted on September 3, 1986 indicated that noise levels at the property line are approximately 54 dBA. Based upon a continuous operation of the substation and the above-described noise level, the 60 dB  $L_{dn}$  contour is located near the property line.

Source: Field observations and noise measurements by BBA on September 3, 1986.

#### City of Los Banos Storm Drain Lift Pump

The City of Los Banos storm drain lift pump located near the intersection of East B Street and Mercey Springs Road operates as required during a storm to control runoff. The large turbine pump has operated a total of 260 hours since 1961. A smaller turbine pump (5 h.p.) operates 6-7 hours/day to control water discharge from a local industrial use. Noise levels measured at 25 feet from the pump were 55 dBA on September 3, 1986. An emergency standby diesel generator is tested by the City approximately once a week for a 10-minute period. Although the diesel generator was not running during the measurement period, it is anticipated that noise levels of approximately 85 dBA at 50 feet





would be produced during these tests. With the exception of the periodic testing of the diesel generator, noise levels from this installation are not significant.

Source: Mr. Matthew Barcellos, Director of Public Works, City of Los Banos, telephone interview on October 17, 1986.

#### Lifetime Doors, Inc.

The primary sources of noise at the Lifetime Doors, Inc., manufacturing plant are a dust collector and "hogger" at the south side of the building and a group of fans at the north side of the building. The plant is normally operated on weekdays from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., although the work shift is sometimes extended to 6:00 a.m. to as late as 5:00 p.m. The dust collector hogger is used twice a day for relatively brief periods. The noise contours shown in Figure 2 have been prepared in terms of  $L_{dn}$  for the combined operation of the dust collector, hogger and fans based upon the above-described hours of operation and noise level data collected at the plant on September 3, 1986.

Source: Personal interview with Lifetime Doors, Inc., management on September 3, 1986.

#### AutoMate Recreational Products

The AutoMate manufacturing plant operates from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. weekdays, with occasional overtime shifts. The recreational vehicle assembly process is contained within a large building, but some metal fabrication activities are conducted outside at the east end of the property. Primary noise sources at that end of the plant are metal cutting with an electrically-powered blade, hammering on steel, and a compressor located at the southeast corner of the building. Noise levels are generally insignificant at the front and sides of the plant, though some plant operations are audible. The noise contours shown in Figure 2 have been prepared in terms of  $L_{dn}$  for operations occurring outside the east end of the property.

Source: Personal interview with AutoMate Recreational Products management on September 3, 1986.



### Los Banos Lumber & Sales Co.

The Los Banos Lumber Co. store and sales yard are operated from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday-Saturday. Saws are used up to 3 hours per day, although not on a continuous basis. A planing mill is used about 4 times/month for custom orders. Fork lifts move between the yard, store and warehouse located at the rear of the property. There are no significant continuous noise sources associated with this operation, although saws and the planing mill may be audible on an intermittent basis. The residential area west of the yard is shielded from onsite activities by a large warehouse.

Source: Personal interview with Los Banos Lumber and Sales Co. personnel on September 4, 1986.

### Commercial Area Between Mercey Springs Road and Santa Rita Road and Between D Street and San Luis Street

This area contains the Los Banos Lumber & Sales Co. yard, a Browning Ferris Industries (BFI) equipment storage yard, a truck maintenance shop for Kings County Truck Lines and a general truck repair and equipment storage site. The buildings associated with these commercial developments provide shielding for the residential developments west of Santa Rita Street from noise due to traffic on Mercey Springs Road. The general truck repair and equipment storage yard at the southeast corner of Santa Rita Road and D Street could produce noise objectionable to nearby residents, depending upon the time of day and what type of machinery is in use. Other uses in this commercial area do not appear to generate any significant noise impacts upon residential areas.

Source: Field investigation and noise measurements by BBA on September 4, 1986

### Sugar Beet Loading Facilities

These loading areas are located along the S.P.T.Co. railroad tracks. Since they were not in operation during the study period, noise level data were not collected. Significant noise sources associated with the operation of these facilities would be the movement of heavy trucks and the operation of stationary motors and conveyors. Since these facilities are generally





shielded from noise sensitive land uses by the packing sheds and cold storage facilities located along the railroad tracks and are used on a seasonal basis, it is not anticipated that they are significant sources of noise exposure within the community.

### Ag Sports Complex and Regional Park

This facility is located on North Mercey Springs Road at the northern edge of the community. The complex is used for sports events and would be expected to generate noise as the result of the use of the P.A. system and possibly cheering by spectators. There were no organized uses of the complex during the September 3-4, 1986 study period. At the present time there are no noise-sensitive land uses located close enough to the facility to be exposed to noise levels exceeding 60 dB  $L_{dn}$ , although intermittent noise levels during period of peak use are probably audible in the residential area located south of the project. It is recommended that a site-specific analysis of potential noise impacts and mitigation measures be required by the City of Los Banos if new noise-sensitive land uses are proposed in close proximity of the complex.

## 2.7 Community Noise Survey

As required by the Government Code and ONC Guidelines, a community noise survey was conducted to document noise exposure in areas of the community containing noise sensitive land uses. The following noise sensitive land uses were identified within the City of Los Banos.

1. All residential uses
2. Schools
3. Long-term care medical facilities, such as hospitals, nursing homes, etc.

Noise monitoring sites were selected to be representative of typical conditions in areas of the community where such uses are located. A total of 12 monitoring sites were selected. Five of these sites were located near monitoring sites used in 1975 by the City of Los Banos during the preparation of the original Noise Element. Short-term noise monitoring was conducted during three periods of the day and night on September 2 and 3, 1986, so that reasonable estimates of the  $L_{dn}$  in these areas could be prepared. The data collected during the sampling included the  $L_{eq}$ , maximum noise level and minimum noise level and a description of major sources of noise which were audible at the monitoring sites.



Community noise monitoring equipment consisted of Bruel & Kjaer Type 2218 and 2230 precision integrating sound level meters fitted with 1/2" microphones and a Metrosonics dB 604 environmental noise analyzer. The measurement systems were calibrated in the field prior to use with acoustical calibrators, and comply with all applicable requirements of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) for Type I (Precision) sound level meters. Noise monitoring sites, measured noise levels and estimated  $L_{dn}$  values for each of the sites are summarized in Table III. The approximate locations of the community noise survey monitoring sites are noted in Figure 1.

The community noise survey results indicate that typical noise levels in noise sensitive areas of the City of Los Banos are in the range of 49-58 dB  $L_{dn}$ . As would be expected, the quietest areas are those which are removed from major noise sources such as Pacheco Boulevard (SR 152), Mercey Springs Road (SR 165), B Street and local industrial or other stationary noise sources. Good examples of these quiet areas were residential areas represented in the survey by Sites 5, 7, 9 and 11. Maximum noise levels during the survey were generally caused by local traffic or heavy trucks on Pacheco Boulevard or Mercey Springs Road. Other sources of maximum noise levels included occasional aircraft overflights (observed to be very infrequent) and fire alarms (possibly the noon whistle). Background noise levels in the absence of the above-described sources of maximum noise levels included distant traffic and industrial or other stationary noise sources. A major source of background noise levels during the community noise survey was the operation of packing sheds and truck-mounted or stationary refrigeration equipment. Such sources were generally audible throughout much of the central part of town at all hours of the day and night. Such sources were particularly audible at night when traffic noise was at a minimum.

## CHAPTER THREE

### GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

#### 3.1 Goals

The goals of the Noise Element of the General Plan are to protect the citizens of Los Banos from the harmful effects of exposure to excessive noise, and to protect the economic base of the City by preventing the encroachment of incompatible land uses near known noise-producing roadways, industries, railroads, airports and other sources. These goals may be realized by pursuing the objectives and policies outlined in this chapter.



TABLE III

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY NOISE SURVEY RESULTS  
LOS BANOS, CALIFORNIA  
SEPTEMBER 2 AND 3, 1986

Site #	Description	Level, dBA				Estimated $L_{dn}$
		$L_D$	$L_N$	$L_{min}$ (Source)	$L_{max}$ (Source)	
1	Ag Sports Complex	51	39	35 (traffic)	60 (Local traffic)	50 dB
2	Overland Ave. @ SR 165	56	42	37 (traffic)	68 (Trucks)	55 dB
3	North St. @ D St.	56	41	36 (industry)	78 (Fire alarm)	55 dB
4	R.M. Miano School	56	46	38 (industry)	76 (Local traffic)	56 dB
5	Los Banos Community Hospital	51	44	41 (fans)	69 (Local traffic)	52 dB
6	Racquet Club Area	51	48	39 (industry)	69 (Local traffic)	55 dB
7	St. Alban's Episcopal Church	48	46	38 (traffic)	65 (Local traffic)	53 dB
8	Los Banos Park	59	47	42 (industry)	81 (Fire alarm)	58 dB
9	Birch Ave @ West I St.	49	40	38 (traffic)	71 (Local traffic)	49 dB
10	Our Lady of Fatima School	53	45	40 (traffic)	70 (Local traffic)	54 dB
11	Jackson Ave. @ Monte Vista Dr.	47	41	37 (fans)	62 (Local traffic)	49 dB
12	Merced Jr. College	54	47	40 (fans)	76 (Trucks)	55 dB

$L_D$  = Average  $L_{eq}$  of two 15-minute samples obtained between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

$L_N$  =  $L_{eq}$  for one 15-minute sample obtained between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.

Source: Brown-Buntin Associates, Inc.





### 3.2 Land Use Compatibility Guidelines

Figure 3 is provided as a reference concerning the sensitivity of different land uses to their noise environment. It is intended to illustrate the range of noise levels which will allow the full range of activities normally associated with a given land use. For example, exterior noise levels in the range of 50-60 dB  $L_{dn}$  (or CNEL) are generally considered acceptable for residential land uses, since these levels will usually allow normal outdoor and indoor activities such as sleep and communication to occur without interruption. Industrial facilities, however, can be relatively insensitive to noise and may generally be located in a noise environment of up to 75 dB  $L_{dn}$  (or CNEL) without significant adverse effects. Specific noise compatibility criteria in terms of  $L_{dn}$  or CNEL for residential and noise sensitive land uses within the City of Los Banos are defined in Section 3.3 of this chapter.

### 3.3 Policies

The following policy statements reflect the commitment of the City of Los Banos to the noise-related goals outlined above:

#### Policy 3.3.1

Areas within the City of Los Banos shall be designated as noise-impacted if exposed to existing or projected future noise levels exterior to buildings exceeding 60 dB  $L_{dn}$  (or CNEL) or the performance standards described by Table IV. (Figure 2 indicates areas of the City where existing or projected future noise exposures exceed 60 dB  $L_{dn}$  or CNEL for the major noise sources identified during the preparation of this Noise Element.

#### Policy 3.3.2

New development of residential or other noise-sensitive land uses will not be permitted in noise-impacted areas unless effective mitigation measures are incorporated into project designs to reduce noise to the following levels:

- a. For noise attributable to sources which are preempted from local control, such as traffic on public roadways, railroads and airports, 60 dB  $L_{dn}$  (or CNEL) or less in outdoor activity areas and 45 dB  $L_{dn}$  (or CNEL) or less within interior living spaces or other noise-sensitive



FIGURE 3

## Land Use Compatibility For Community Noise Environments

LAND USE CATEGORY	COMMUNITY NOISE EXPOSURE L <sub>dn</sub> OR CNEL, dB					
	55	60	65	70	75	80
RESIDENTIAL – LOW DENSITY SINGLE FAMILY, DUPLEX, MOBILE HOMES						
RESIDENTIAL – MULTI. FAMILY						
TRANSIENT LODGING – MOTELS, HOTELS						
SCHOOLS, LIBRARIES, CHURCHES, HOSPITALS, NURSING HOMES						
AUDITORIUMS, CONCERT HALLS, AMPHITHEATRES						
SPORTS ARENA, OUTDOOR SPECTATOR SPORTS						
PLAYGROUNDS, NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS						
GOLF COURSES, RIDING STABLES, WATER RECREATION, CEMETERIES						
OFFICE BUILDINGS, BUSINESS COMMERCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL						
INDUSTRIAL, MANUFACTURING UTILITIES, AGRICULTURE						

## INTERPRETATION



## NORMALLY ACCEPTABLE

Specified land use is satisfactory, based upon the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal conventional construction, without any special noise insulation requirements.



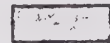
## CONDITIONALLY ACCEPTABLE

New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements is made and needed noise insulation features included in the design. Conventional construction, but with closed windows and fresh air supply systems or air conditioning will normally suffice.



## NORMALLY UNACCEPTABLE

New construction or development should generally be discouraged. If new construction or development does proceed, a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features included in the design.



## CLEARLY UNACCEPTABLE

New construction or development should generally not be undertaken.

## CONSIDERATIONS IN DETERMINATION OF NOISE-COMPATIBLE LAND USE

## A. NORMALIZED NOISE EXPOSURE INFORMATION DESIRED

Where sufficient data exists, evaluate land use suitability with respect to a "normalized" value of CNEL or L<sub>dn</sub>. Normalized values are obtained by adding or subtracting the constants described in Table 1 to the measured or calculated value of CNEL or L<sub>dn</sub>.

## B. NOISE SOURCE CHARACTERISTICS

The land use-noise compatibility recommendations should be viewed in relation to the specific source of the noise. For example, aircraft and railroad noise is normally made up of higher single noise events than auto traffic but occurs less frequently. Therefore, different sources yielding the same composite noise exposure do not necessarily create the same noise environment. The State Aeronautics Act uses 65 dB CNEL as the criterion which airports must eventually meet to protect existing residential communities from unacceptable exposure to aircraft noise. In order to facilitate the purposes of the Act, one of which is to encourage land uses compatible with the 65 dB CNEL criterion wherever possible, and in order to facilitate the ability of airports to comply with the Act, residential uses located in Com-

munity Noise Exposure Areas greater than 65 dB should be discouraged and considered located within normally unacceptable areas.

## C. SUITABLE INTERIOR ENVIRONMENTS

One objective of locating residential units relative to a known noise source is to maintain a suitable interior noise environment at no greater than 45 dB CNEL of L<sub>dn</sub>. This requirement, coupled with the measured or calculated noise reduction performance of the type of structure under consideration, should govern the minimum acceptable distance to a noise source.

## D. ACCEPTABLE OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENTS

Another consideration, which in some communities is an overriding factor, is the desire for an acceptable outdoor noise environment. When this is the case, more restrictive standards for land use compatibility, typically below the maximum considered "normally acceptable" for that land use category, may be appropriate.





interior spaces. Where it is not possible to reduce exterior noise attributable to these sources to 60 dB L<sub>dn</sub> (or CNEL) or less using a practical application of the best available noise-reduction technology, an exterior noise level of up to 65 dB L<sub>dn</sub> (or CNEL) will be allowed. Under no circumstances will interior noise levels be allowed to exceed 45 dB L<sub>dn</sub> (or CNEL) with the windows and doors closed.

- b. For noise due to sources which are not preempted from local control, such as local industries or other stationary noise sources, 60 dB L<sub>dn</sub> (or CNEL) or less in outdoor activity areas, 45 dB L<sub>dn</sub> (or CNEL) or less within interior living spaces or other noise-sensitive interior spaces and the performance standards contained within Table IV.

TABLE IV

NOISE LEVEL PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Exterior Noise Level Standards

Cumulative Number of			
	minutes in any one-hour	Daytime	Nighttime
Category	time period	7 a.m to 10 p.m.	10 p.m. to 7 a.m.
*****			
1	30	55	45
2	15	60	50
3	5	65	55
4	1	70	60
5	0	75	65

Each of the noise level standards specified in Table IV shall be reduced by five (5) dBA for pure tone noises, noises consisting primarily of speech or music, or for recurring impulsive noises. The standards in Table IV should be applied at a residential or other noise-sensitive land use and not on the property of a noise-generating land use.



### Policy 3.3.3

New development of industrial, commercial or other noise-generating land uses will not be permitted if resulting noise levels will exceed 60 dB L<sub>dn</sub> (or CNEL) in areas containing residential or other noise-sensitive land uses. Additionally, the development of new noise-generating land uses which are not preempted from local noise regulation will not be permitted if resulting noise levels will exceed the performance standards contained within Table IV in areas containing residential or other noise-sensitive land uses.

### Policy 3.3.4

Noise level criteria applied to land uses other than residential or other noise-sensitive uses shall be consistent with the recommendations of the California Office of Noise Control (Figure 3).

### Policy 3.3.5

New equipment and vehicles purchased by the City of Los Banos shall comply with noise level performance standards consistent with the best available noise reduction technology.

### Policy 3.3.6

In conformance with the directives of State planning law, the City of Los Banos shall ensure that the Noise Element is consistent with and does not conflict with other elements of the City's General Plan.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

The goals and policies of this Noise Element shall be implemented by undertaking the following directives:



4.1 The City of Los Banos shall review all relevent development plans, programs and proposals, including those initiated by both the public and private sectors, to ascertain and ensure their conformance to the policy framework outlined in this Element. Appendix A is a discussion of the techniques most commonly used for the mitigation of noise impacts. It is intended that Appendix A be used by the City to ascertain whether or not the noise mitigation measures suggested by development proposals are a reasonable application of noise mitigation techniques, and to determine whether suggested mitigation measures are likely to achieve compliance with the policies of the Noise Element.

4.2 Prior to the approval of a proposed development of residential or other noise-sensitive land uses in a noise-impacted area, or the development of an industrial, commercial or other noise-generating land use in an area containing noise-sensitive land uses, an acoustical analysis shall be required. An exception to this, at the option of the reviewing agency, will be in the case of a proposed development of residential or other noise-sensitive land uses not subject to the requirements of California Administrative Code Title 24, where the proposed use is to be located adjacent to a traffic noise source, and the existing or future noise exposure is 60-65 dB  $L_{dn}$  (or CNEL). In this case, a noise barrier with an effective height of seven (7) feet, or such other specific noise mitigation measures as the reviewing agency might determine to be appropriate, may be required in lieu of an acoustical analysis, provided the project and adjacent roadway are at the same grade and outdoor activity areas (patios, decks, etc.) are located at the first floor level or on the opposite side of the structure from the noise source. Where required, an acoustical analysis shall:

- a. Be the responsibility of the applicant.
- b. Be prepared by a qualified acoustical consultant experienced in the fields of environmental noise assessment and architectural acoustics.
- c. Include representative noise level measurements with sufficient sampling periods and locations to adequately describe local conditions.





- d. Include estimated noise levels in terms of  $L_{dn}$  (or CNEL) and the standards of Table II (if applicable) for existing and projected future (10-20 years hence) conditions, with a comparison made to the adopted policies of the Noise Element.
- e. Include recommendations for appropriate mitigation to achieve compliance with the adopted policies and standards of the Noise Element.
- f. Include estimates of noise exposure after the prescribed mitigation measures have been implemented. If compliance with the adopted standards and policies of the Noise Element will not be achieved, a rationale for acceptance of the project must be provided.

4.3 The City of Los Banos shall develop and implement procedures to ensure that requirements imposed pursuant to the findings of an acoustical analysis are implemented as part of the project permitting process.

4.4 The City of Los Banos shall enforce the State Noise Insulation Standards (California Administrative Code, Title 24) and Chapter 35 of the Uniform Building Code concerning the construction of new multiple-occupancy dwellings such as hotels, apartments, and condominiums in areas where the existing or projected future noise environment exceeds 60 dB  $L_{dn}$  or CNEL.

4.5 Noise exposure information developed during the community noise survey described in this Noise Element shall be used as a guideline for the development and adoption of a community noise control ordinance to address noise complaints, and to provide local industry with performance standards for future development and equipment modifications. The ordinance should be consistent with the "Model Community Noise Control Ordinance" prepared by the California Office of Noise Control in 1977 with modifications made to reflect local concerns and conditions.



- 4.6 The City of Los Banos shall actively enforce existing sections of the California Vehicle Code relating to adequate vehicle mufflers and modified exhaust systems and shall encourage the California Highway Patrol to do the same within the City.
- 4.7 The findings and policies of the Noise Element shall be incorporated into the zoning ordinance of the City of Los Banos as appropriate.
- 4.8 The Land Use and Circulation Elements of the City of Los Banos General Plan shall be reviewed to ensure consistency with the findings and policies of the Noise Element as they relate to the prevention of future noise conflicts.
- 4.9 The Noise Element of the City of Los Banos General Plan shall periodically be reviewed and updated to ensure that noise exposure information, objectives and policies are consistent with changing conditions.





## APPENDIX A

### TECHNIQUES FOR NOISE CONTROL

Any noise problem may be considered as being composed of three basic elements: the noise source, a transmission path, and a receiver. Local control of noise sources is practical only with respect to fixed sources (e.g., industrial facilities, outdoor activities, etc.), as control of vehicular sources is generally preempted by federal or state law. Control of fixed noise sources is usually best obtained by enforcement of a local noise control ordinance. The emphasis of noise control in land use planning is usually placed upon acoustical treatment of the transmission path and the receiving structures.

The appropriate acoustical treatment for a given project should consider the nature of the noise source and the sensitivity of the receiver. The problem should be defined in terms of appropriate criteria (e.g.,  $L_{dn}$ ,  $L_{eq}$ ,  $L_{max}$ ), the location of the sensitive receiver (inside or outside), and when the problem occurs (daytime or nighttime). Noise control techniques should then be selected to provide an acceptable noise environment for the receiving property while remaining consistent with local aesthetic standards and practical structural and economic limits. Basic noise control techniques include the following:

#### USE OF SETBACKS

Noise exposure may be reduced by increasing the distance between the noise source and receiving use. Setback areas can take the form of open space, frontage roads, recreational areas, storage yards, etc. The available noise attenuation from this technique is limited by the characteristics of the noise source, but is generally 4 to 6 dBA per doubling of distance from the source.

#### USE OF BARRIERS

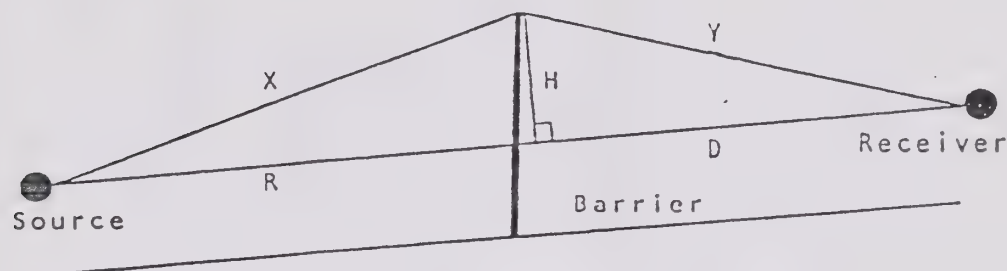
Shielding by barriers can be obtained by placing walls, berms or other structures, such as buildings, between the noise source and the receiver. The effectiveness of a barrier depends upon blocking line-of-sight between the source and receiver, and is improved with increases in distance the sound must travel to pass over the barrier as compared to a straight line from source to receiver. The difference between the distance over a barrier and a straight line between source and receiver is called the "path length difference," and is the basis for calculating barrier effectiveness. Figure A illustrates the



principles of noise control by barriers. The path length difference is the difference between  $(R + D)$  and  $(X + Y)$ .

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FIGURE A



Barrier effectiveness depends upon the relative heights of the source, receiver and barrier. In general, barriers are most effective when placed close to either the receiver or the source. An intermediate barrier location yields a smaller path length difference for a given increase in barrier height than does a location closer to either source or receiver.

For maximum effectiveness, barriers must be continuous and relatively air-tight along their length and height. To ensure that sound transmission through the barrier is insignificant, barrier mass should be about 4 lbs./square foot, although a lesser mass may be acceptable if the barrier material provides sufficient transmission loss in the frequency range of concern. Satisfaction of the above criteria requires substantial and well-fitted barrier materials, placed to intercept line-of-sight to all significant noise sources. Earth, in the form of berms or the face of a depressed area, is also an effective barrier material.

The attenuation provided by a barrier depends upon the frequency content of the source. Generally, higher frequencies are attenuated (reduced) more readily than lower frequencies. This results because a given barrier height is relatively large compared to the shorter wavelengths of high frequency sounds, while relatively small compared to the longer wavelengths of the frequency sounds. The effective center frequency for traffic noise is usually considered to be 550 Hz. Railroad operations, aircraft and industrial noise sources emit noise with differing frequency content, so the effectiveness of a



barrier will vary for each of these sources. Frequency analysis is necessary to properly calculate barrier attenuation of noise from sources other than highway traffic.

There are practical limits to the noise reduction provided by barriers. For highway traffic noise, a 5 to 10 dBA noise reduction may often be reasonably attained. A 15 dBA noise reduction is sometimes possible, but a 20 dBA noise reduction is extremely difficult to achieve. Barriers may be provided in the form of walls, berms, or berm/wall combinations. The use of an earth berm in lieu of a solid wall will provide up to 3 dBA additional attenuation over that attained by a solid wall alone, due to the absorption provided by the earth. Berm/wall combinations offer slightly better acoustical performance than solid walls, and are often preferred for aesthetic reasons.

Another form of barrier is the use of a depressed noise source location, such as depressed roadways or depressed loading areas in shopping centers. The walls of the depression serve to break line-of-sight between the source and receiver, and will provide some absorption if left in earth or vegetative cover.

## SITE DESIGN

Buildings can be placed on a project site to shield other structures or areas, to remove them from noise-impacted areas, and to prevent an increase in noise level caused by reflections. The use of one building to shield another can significantly reduce overall project noise control costs, particularly if the shielding structure is insensitive to noise. As an example, carports or garages can be used to form or complement a barrier shielding adjacent dwellings or an outdoor activity area. Similarly, one residential unit can be placed to shield another so that noise reduction measures are needed for only the building closest to the noise source. Placement of outdoor activity areas within the shielded portion of a building complex, such as a central courtyard, can be an effective method of providing a quiet retreat in an otherwise noisy environment. Patios or balconies should be placed on the side of a building opposite the noise source, and "wing walls" can be added to buildings or patios to help shield sensitive uses.

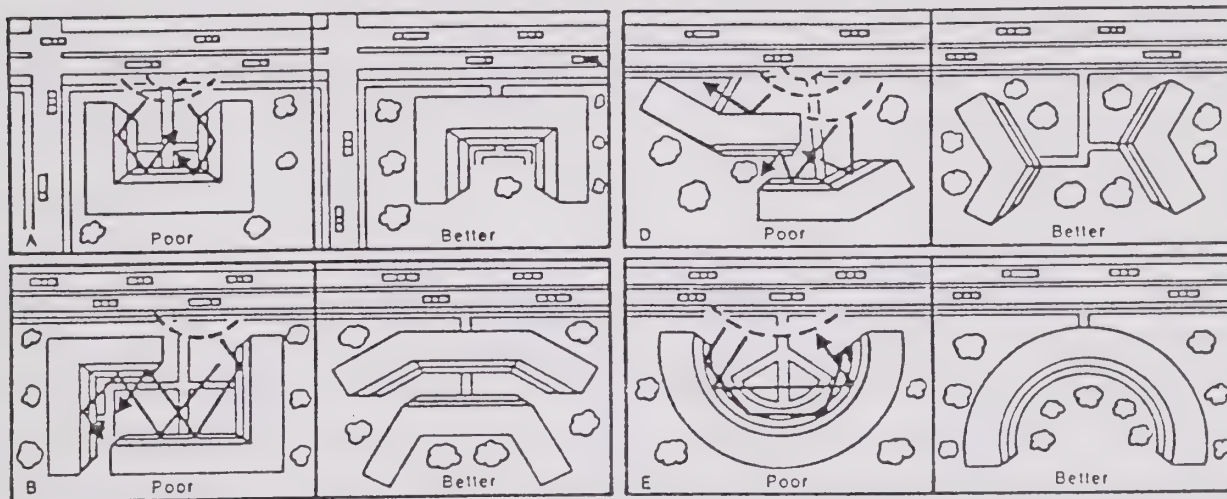
Where project design does not allow using buildings or other land uses to shield sensitive uses, noise control costs can be reduced by orienting





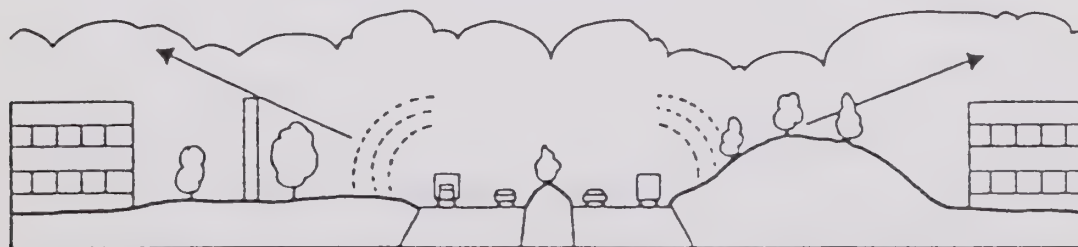
buildings with the narrow end facing the noise source, reducing the total area of the building requiring acoustical treatment. Some examples of building orientation to reduce noise impacts are shown in Figure B.

FIGURE B



Another option in site design is the placement of relatively insensitive land uses, such as commercial or storage areas, between the noise source and a more sensitive portion of the project. Examples include development of a commercial strip along a busy arterial to block noise affecting a residential area, or providing recreational vehicle storage along the noise-impacted edge of a mobile home park. If existing topography or development adjacent to the project site provides some shielding, as in the case of an existing berm, knoll or building, sensitive structures or activity areas may be placed behind those features to reduce noise control costs (Figure C).

FIGURE C



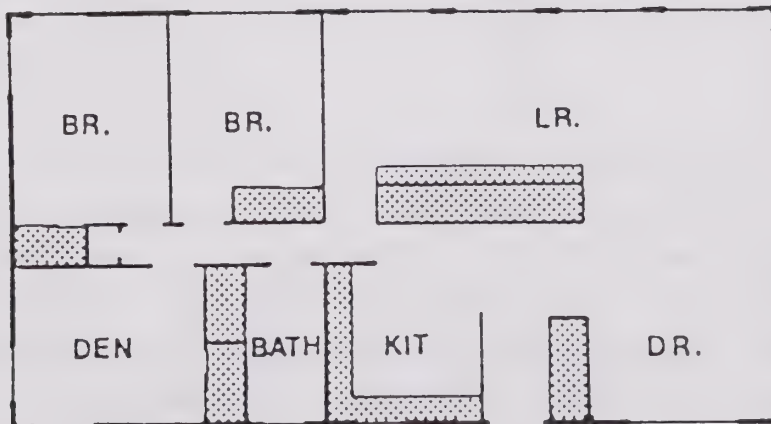


Site design should also guard against the creation of reflecting surfaces which may increase onsite noise levels. For example, two buildings placed at an angle facing a noise source may cause noise levels within that angle to increase by up to 3 dBA. The open end of a "U"-shaped building should point away from noise sources for the same reason. Landscaping walls or noise barriers located within a development may inadvertently reflect noise back to a noise-sensitive area unless carefully located. Avoidance of these problems, as well as attaining an effective, aesthetic site design requires close coordination between local agencies, the project engineer and architect, and the acoustical consultant.

#### UNIT DESIGN

When structures have been located to provide maximum noise reduction by barriers or site design, noise reduction measures may still be required to achieve an acceptable interior noise environment. The cost of such measures may be reduced by placement of interior dwelling unit features. For example, bedrooms, living rooms, family rooms and other noise-sensitive portions of a dwelling can be located on the side of the unit farthest from the noise source, as shown by Figure D.

FIGURE D



---

HIGHWAY

---





Bathrooms, closets, stairwells and food preparation areas are relatively insensitive to exterior noise sources, and can be placed on the noisy side of a unit. When such techniques are employed, noise reduction requirements for the building facade can be significantly reduced, although the architect must take care to isolate the noise impacted areas by the use of partitions or doors.

## BUILDING DESIGN

In some cases, external building facades can influence reflected noise levels affecting adjacent buildings. This is primarily a problem where high-rise buildings are proposed, and the effect is most evident in urban areas, where an "urban canyon" may be created. Bell-shaped or irregular building facades, setbacks and attention to building orientation can reduce this effect.

## NOISE REDUCTION BY BUILDING FACADES

When interior noise levels are of concern in a noisy environment, noise reduction may be obtained through acoustical design of building facades. Standard residential construction practices provide 12-15 dBA noise reduction for building facades with open windows, and 20-25 dBA noise reduction when windows are closed. A 20 dBA outdoor-to-indoor noise reduction can be obtained by requiring that the building design include adequate ventilation systems, allowing windows on a noise-impacted facade to remain closed under any weather condition.

Where greater noise reduction is required, acoustical treatment of the building facade is necessary. If window area is critical, use of acoustical glazing (thicker glass or increased air space between panes), fixed (non-movable) glazing and reduction of windows are effective noise control techniques. Standard energy-conservation double-pane glazing with an 1/8" or 1/4" air-space is not considered acoustical glazing, as its sound transmission loss may be less than single-pane 1/8" glazing. Noise transmitted through walls can be reduced by increasing wall mass (using stucco or brick in lieu of wood siding), isolating wall members by the use of double- or staggered- stud walls, or mounting interior walls on resilient channels.



Noise control measures for exterior doorways include reducing door area, using solid-core doors, and acoustically sealing door perimeters with suitable gaskets. Roof/ceiling treatments may include the use of plywood sheathing under roofing materials or resilient channels for ceiling panels. Vent ducts and openings for attic or subfloor ventilation may also require acoustical treatment. Tight-fitting fireplace dampers and glass doors may be needed in aircraft noise-impacted areas.

Whichever noise control techniques are employed, it is essential that attention be given to installation of weatherstripping and caulking of joints.

Acoustical design for building facades should be based upon analysis of the level and frequency content of the noise source. The transmission loss of each building component should be defined, and the composite noise reduction for the facade calculated, accounting for absorption in the receiving room. A one-third octave band analysis is a definitive method of calculating the A-weighted noise reduction of a facade. Requirements for transmission loss analyses are outlined by Section 2-3501 of the California Administrative Code, Title 24.

A common measure of transmission loss is the Sound Transmission Class (STC). STC ratings are not directly comparable to A-weighted noise reduction, and must be corrected for the spectral content of the noise source.

#### USE OF VEGETATION

It is often supposed that trees and other vegetation can provide significant noise attenuation. However, approximately 100 feet of dense foliage (so that as no visual path extends through the foliage) is required to achieve a 5 dBA attenuation of traffic noise. The use of vegetation as a noise barrier should not be considered a practical method of noise control unless large tracts of dense foliage are part of the existing landscape.

Vegetation can be used to acoustically "soften" intervening ground between a noise source and receiver by increasing ground absorption of sound. Vegetative barriers have been shown to reduce tire noise and other high frequency components of traffic noise. Planting of trees and shrubs is also of aesthetic and psychological value, and may reduce adverse public reaction to a noise source by removing the source from view, even though noise levels may be largely unaffected.



## SOUND ABSORBING MATERIALS

Absorptive materials such as fiberglass, foam, cloth, and acoustical tiles are used to reduce reflections or reverberation in closed spaces. Their outdoor use is usually directed toward reducing reflections between parallel noise barriers or other reflective surfaces. Maintenance of absorptive materials used outdoors is difficult because most such materials are easily damaged by sunlight and moisture. Their application as an outdoor noise control tool is limited to cases where the control of reflected noise is critical.





CITY OF LOS BANOS

SEISMIC SAFETY ELEMENT  
of the  
GENERAL PLAN

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## SEISMIC SAFETY ELEMENT

### INTRODUCTION:

As part of a Community's General Plan, it is necessary to understand the natural forces which effect the City's growth and development. Earthquakes represent by far the most eminent of these environmental forces in California.

Seismology is the study of earthquakes and the related phenomenon of their shock waves created by crustal plate action and subsidiary fault movement. The impact of seismic activity in this State is attested to by the Summary of Findings and Major Recommendations of Joint Committee on Seismic Safety which reported that: "Every significant structure in California can be expected to undergo at least one (1) major earthquake in its lifetime."

Section 65302 of the Government Code requires all cities and counties to adopt a General Plan, which according to Section 65302(f) must include:

A Seismic Safety Element consisting of an identification and appraisal of seismic hazards such as susceptibility to surface ruptures from faulting, to ground shaking, to ground failures, or to effects of seismically induced waves such as tsunamics and seiches.

Senate Bill 591 elaborates further on the Element stating that:

The Seismic Safety Element shall also include an appraisal of mudslides, landslides, and slope stability as necessary geologic hazards that must be considered simultaneously with other hazards such as possible surface rupture from faulting, ground shaking, ground failure and seismically induced waves.

The planning area for this report will be the same as



that previously described in the Conservation/Open Space Element, namely, the area bounded on the south by Phillips Road, on the west by Los Banos Creek, on the north by Henry Miller Road, and on the east by the Santa Fe Grade. Also, a general Sphere of Interest is identified as extending to the San Luis Reservoir on the west, Interstate 5 on the south, San Pedro Slough on the east and the San Luis National Wildlife Refuge on the north.

#### GOALS:

The goals of the Seismic Element are:

- 1) A better public understanding of environmental hazards with particular reference to potential seismic activity in the Los Banos area.
- 2) The implementation of safety policies.
- 3) The prevention of serious personal injury and property damage due to seismic disturbance.

#### GEOLOGIC CONDITIONS:

The Los Banos area is generally composed of alluvial materials deposited from tributaries of the western hills with some deposition along the eastern portion from the San Joaquin River. Since alluvium does not lend itself to faulting, little seismic activity has originated from the Los Banos area and as a result there are no known faults in the immediate area.

Further west in the foothills of the Diablo Mountains, the Ortigalita Fault Zone runs in a northwesterly direction through San Luis Reservoir. The Ortigalita Fault system does not have any historic record of displacement. However, the Santa Clara



Valley, twenty (20) miles west of the Ortigalita Fault, is the site of several major faults which indicate the dividing point between two of the earth's major crustal plates. The best known of these is North America's largest and most seismically active area - The San Andreas Fault, located only an approximate thirty five (35) miles from Los Banos.

#### POTENTIAL SEISMIC ACTIVITY:

Hazards from earthquakes result from two processes - movement along a fault and ground shaking. The absence of any known faults within the Los Banos planning area reduces the probability of damage from earth movement. However, since the Los Banos area is composed of relatively loosely compacted deep alluvium, the resulting effect from the movement of shock waves along distant active faults (i.e. Hollister area faults) could be severe. The effect of shock waves on the earth's surface can be grossly compared to the shaking of a bowl of gelatin. Due to the ground composition of western portion of Merced County and its proximity to seismically active areas, the Los Banos area has been classified as having a high potential earthquake intensity (severity) in the Urban Geology Master Plan of California.

In addition to earthquake intensity, the frequency of earthquakes must be considered. Historically, Merced County has not suffered from earthquakes. The major exception to this was in 1906 when severe damage was done in Los Banos as a result of





the infamous San Francisco Quake which caused an estimated One Hundred Ten Thousand Dollars (\$110,000.00) to One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$150,000.00) (1906 values) in damage.

An April 21, 1906 newspaper account in the Los Banos Enterprise entitled "A Terrible Earthquake" recounts the following:

Naturally it was the brick structures in Los Banos which suffered worst. The new Opera House, the Hotel Los Banos, Miller & Lux store and bank building and the brick store owned by C. F. Bartholf. The force of the shock was most felt at the Hotel Los Banos though that building suffered the least of any of the brick structures.

The brick building just north of the Opera House, occupied by the saloon of Faure & Toscano, but belonging to C. F. Bertholf, was entirely demolished. The north wall of the Opera House caved in upon it. Frank Toscano, who slept in this building, had a very narrow escape from death. From his account, Toscano heard the shock and immediately a brick dislodged from the Opera House building fell upon the roof of the saloon. He sprang out of bed and darted from the building. He stated that the earth shook so that he could hardly stand but that he managed to reach the ditch, when immediately after leaving the building the whole structure caved in filling his room with many tons of brick and mortar. Mr. Toscano stated that he stood in the ditch and watched the progress of the earthquake. The tall buildings swayed like saplings in a storm and it looked as if one and all would be leveled to the ground. "The Opera House was first to go," said Mr. Toscano, "Then followed the bank building after which the north side of the Hotel Los Banos was seen to topple over and fall carrying away the back porch and fences. The big tank belonging to the S. P. Co., at the depot, swayed like a reed, then all at once it seemed as if something lifted it far aloft and then sent it crashing to the ground."

Since 1906 little seismic activity has been felt in the Los Banos area and no substantial damage has occurred in Merced County. Minor earth tremors have, of course, always occurred and will continue to take place but have no significant effect on life or property.



The severity of the 1906 earthquake resulted in part from the geologic and soils condition indigenous to this area. The Los Banos area is depicted in the State Geologic Report and the Principles of Geology by Geber et al as being in an area of generally high subsidence and expansive soils. Local geologists have contested this finding, but the documentation cited substantiates that subsidence and expansive soils are definitely geologic features of this region.

The effect of seismic activity on these conditions could cause extensive building damage. Coupled with the high water table of the area, conditions could, as a result of severe ground shaking, produce an effect known as liquefaction. Liquefaction results from the upward flow of water into the upper soil profile in which it becomes a quicksandlike substance in which structures can sink.

Subsidence, expansive soils, and the possibility of liquefaction all become realistic possibilities for damage to the Los Banos area when it is realized that an earthquake having the same magnitude as the 1906 San Francisco Quake could occur in the Hollister area on the San Andreas Fault. The fact that the San Luis Dam was engineered specifically to withstand such a quake indicates the realistic probability of the occurrence of such a quake which would have severe consequences in Los Banos due to its close proximity.

A major concern relative to seismic activity in Los Banos is its proximity to three (3) large, man-made bodies of water: The San Luis Dam with a capacity of two million one hundred





thousand (2,100,000) acre feet; the Los Banos Detention Dam capable of holding thirty four thousand five hundred (34,500) acre feet; and the O'Neill Forebay with a fifty six thousand (56,000) acre foot capacity.

Seismic damage to the Los Banos Detention Dam would probably have the greatest effect on Los Banos because of the Dam's location upstream from the City and due to the natural flow of the Creek being directly into the City. A failure in the San Luis Dam would not be as likely to cause direct damage to Los Banos proper because of its distance from the City and the fact that the natural flow from the Dam is away from Los Banos. However, because of the immense volume of water held by the San Luis Dam and O'Neill Forebay, damage to either structure could cause flooding in Los Banos as a result of overflowing and washouts in our canal system which would release water in the area of the City.

Damage to local dams from seismic activity is not considered to be a substantial danger to life and property in Los Banos. This is due to the earthfill type of dam construction and the fact that the San Luis Dam was engineered to withstand a quake the magnitude of the 1906 disaster only with an epicenter in Hollister. It should be noted, however, that the San Luis Dam was constructed prior to the 1971 earthquake in San Fernando which provided modern data previously unavailable on the seismic effects on soil liquefaction as it applies to earthfill dams. It is also noteworthy that Stanislaus County, being in the natural flow system of the San Luis Reservoir, acknowledges the possibility of dam



failure from seismic activity and the potential threat to life and property as a result. This precaution is set forth in the Geology and Seismic Safety portion of the Environmental Resources Management Element for Stanislaus County prepared by the Stanislaus Area Association of Governments.

Inundation maps for the San Luis, O'Neill Forebay and Los Banos Dam have been requested from the State in order to determine more precisely which areas would be affected in the event that a failure did occur in one of these structures. As indicated in Appendix No. 5, the State has not completed these documents, however, upon their completion, they will be made a part of this Element.

Other safety hazards resulting from seismic activity are tsunamis and seiches. Tsunamis or tidal waves are not a threat to Los Banos because of its inland location. Seiches are potentially dangerous waves caused by the oscillation of water in lakes, reservoirs, or other bodies of water as a result of seismicity. However, only a few instances of damage from seiches have actually occurred and again, due to our location, the eventuality of destruction from seiches is somewhat remote in this area.

Other hazards, which under State Law are to be considered in a Seismic Safety Element are: slope stability, landslides and mudslides. Because of the topographic conditions in Los Banos, none of these hazards is considered to be a serious threat to life or property.



### BUILDING SAFETY CONDITIONS:

The greatest impact of an earthquake in Los Banos would be on the structures of the City. The majority of structures, being relatively new, are somewhat secure, especially the newer school structures built since 1933 include anti-stress construction. The older structures, especially the non-reinforced brick and adobe buildings in the downtown area, could be lost in a moderate quake. Such a quake could also damage the utility system, especially since a large percentage (20%) of the water and sewer lines are over forty (40) years old and theoretically have a greater propensity for breaking under stress. This could cause a safety and health hazard in an earthquake aftermath, which was the case in San Francisco following the 1906 quake. In reference to the San Francisco earthquake, the Los Banos Enterprise published an article on April 21, 1906 entitled: "SAN FRANCISCO IS DOOMED! Fire Follows Earthquake, Water Mains Are Destroyed, Resulting in Total Demolishment of the Metropolis".

Generally, California Building Codes, including the Uniform Building Code as adopted by the City of Los Banos, contain provisions to reduce damage from moderate earthquakes. The City of Los Banos adopted as early as December 1, 1915, Ordinance No. 84 establishing building and fire regulations for various districts in the City. The ordinance stipulated that only reinforced brick and concrete construction would be permitted in the downtown area. Chimneys were to be of brick or stone, and patent chimneys were required to be constructed on iron plates and braced with iron





brackets. Wood frame construction required 2" x 4" studs, 16" on center, which is the current standard. Regulations were enforced by the Fire Marshal and violations were punishable by a fine of Ten Dollars (\$10.00) to One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00), or thirty (30) days in jail, or both.

In 1931 the City adopted Ordinance 140 requiring building permits and formalizing the approval procedure implemented by Ordinance No. 84. The first record of the adoption of the Standardized Uniform Building Codes is Ordinance No. 189 which adopted the 1949 Edition of the Uniform Building Code. The City still operates under the Uniform Building Code, currently having adopted the 1973 Edition as published by the International Conference of Building Officials.

#### ACCEPTABLE RISK:

An "acceptable risk" for planning and building must be set. In view of the low probability of earthquakes originating in our planning area, an acceptable risk can be defined as the seismic hazard to life and property that remains after the enforcement of currently adopted building codes; planning and zoning regulations; State standards regulating earthquake safety in schools, hospitals and similar buildings; and other precautions and policies recommended in this Report.

#### SEISMIC SAFETY POLICY OF THE CITY:

The City's Seismic Safety Policy shall be outlined as



follows:

1. That Building Codes be maintained to the latest revisions of the Uniform Building Code.
2. That buildings be inventoried over a period of years and those structurally unsound in moderate seismic activity be known.
3. That those buildings whose structural resistance is questionable in seismic activity be considered for upgrading or demolition.
4. That a report of structures which are seismically unsound be filed with the property owner and with the County Recorder's Office to insure that all future owners are aware of the condition and risks.
5. That the present height limitation of fifty (50) feet be maintained, and/or that the number of stories of a structure be limited to four (4).
6. That soil compaction tests and a geo-technical analysis of soil behavior in seismic conditions be made on every subdivision, and every commercial, industrial, and institutional structure over six thousand (6,000) square feet in area or hold over one hundred (100) people (for institutional structures).
7. That an emergency preparedness plan for the City of Los Banos be adopted with the coordination of Local Safety Agencies be developed.





8. That the Urban Geology Master Plan for California, Bulletin 198 of the State Division of Mines and Geology, be adopted as a part of this Element.
9. That the Seismic Safety Element for the County of Merced be adopted as an integral part of this Element.
10. That all available future advances in seismology and earthquake damage prevention be examined for inclusion in this Element.
11. That an education awareness program to inform the Community of seismic safety and their role in lessening the dangers be instigated.

#### CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, a statement from the Summary of Findings and Major Recommendations of the Joint Committee on Seismic Safety is appropriate:

Most people do not realize that increased safety can be obtained at low costs. This is particularly true in new constructions. A home or business can be built to withstand a moderate earthquake without structural damage, and to withstand a major quake without collapse - at only a one (1) to two (2) percent increase in project cost.

The adoption and implementation of this Seismic Safety Element of the General Plan will assist the City in attaining a higher level of safety from seismic activity with a minimal increase in cost to the public.



## SOURCES CONSULTED

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MOQUESTO

# SEISMICITY

## CENTRAL CALIFORNIA

JAN. 1962 TO JUNE 1965

SOURCE: Plate I in "Seismological Evidence of the Tectonics of Central and Northern California and the Mendocino Escarpment," Bulletin of the Seismological Society of America, Vol. 58, 1968

Merced

Los Banos

SAN LUIS RESERVOIR

CALIFORNIA

ORTIGALITA

AQUEDUCT

LLA

SAC

Salinas

Monterey

Hollister

Watsonville

Corralitos

GCC  
SCC

MHC

San Jose

PAG

SOUTH BAY  
AQUEDUCT

FAULT

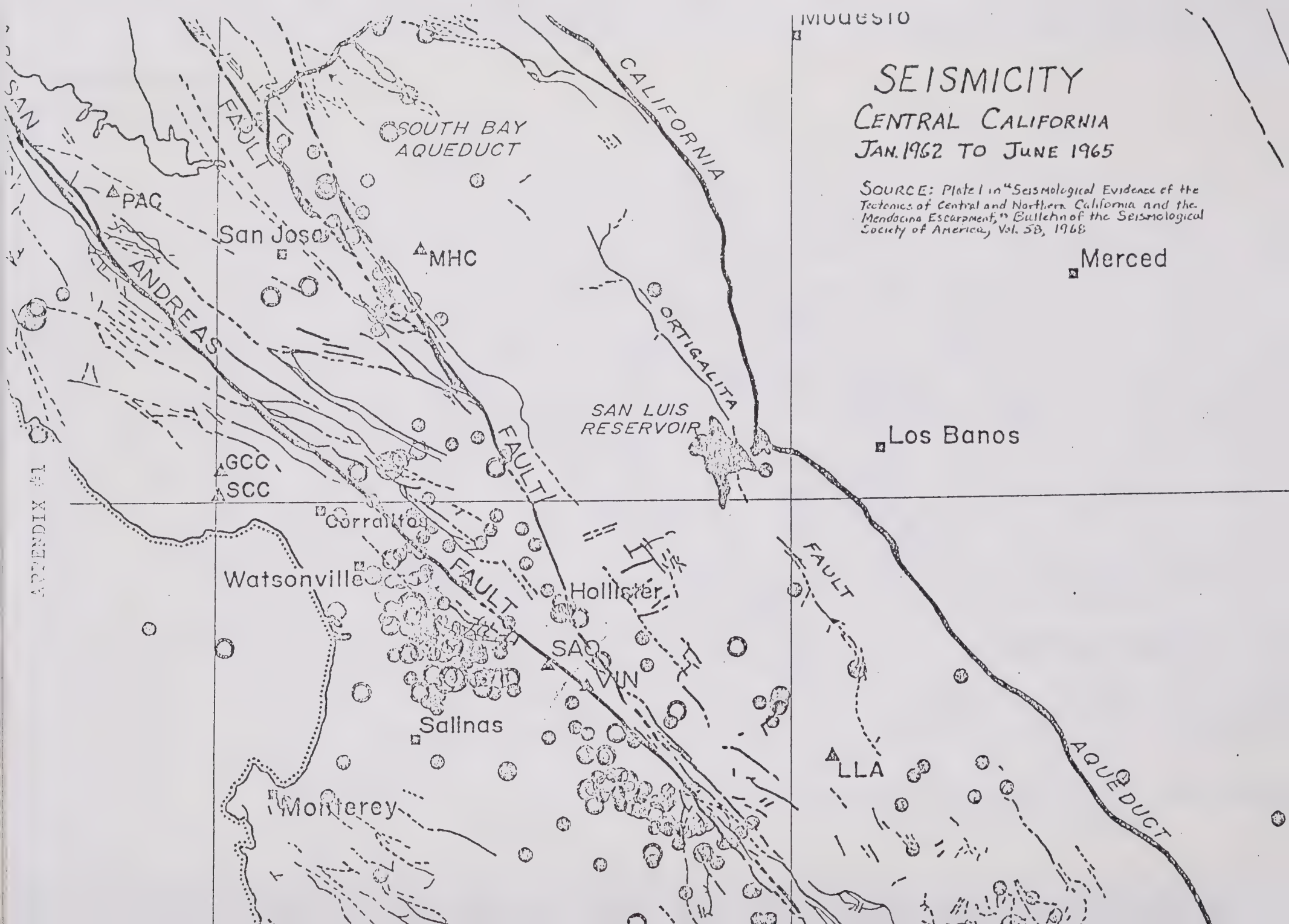
ANDREAS

FAULT

FAULT

FAULT

APPENDIX #1







Preliminary Map of  
MAXIMUM EXPECTABLE EARTHQUAKE INTENSITY (caused by ground shaking)  
In California

In California

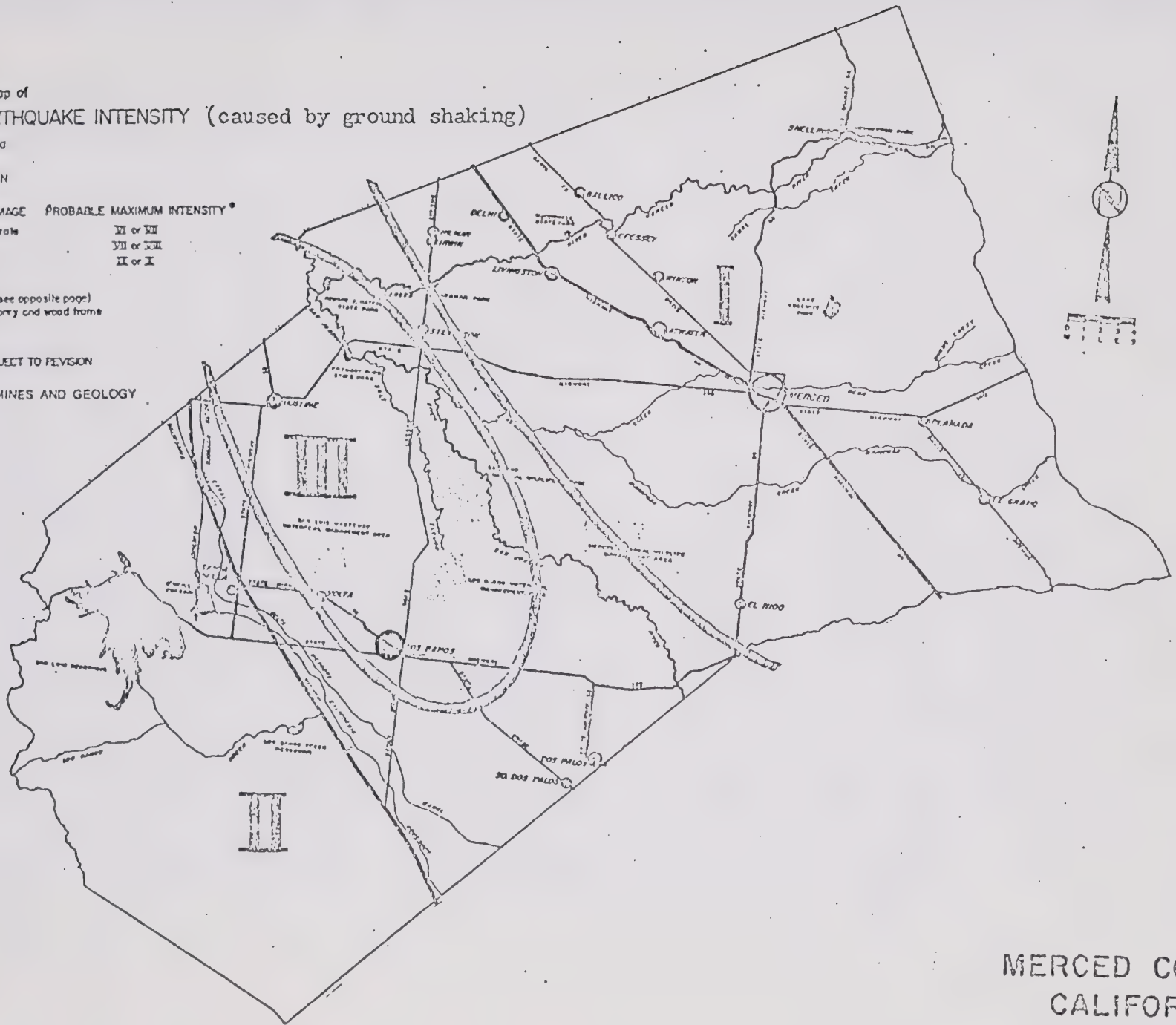
EXPLANATION

SEVERITY ZONES	MAP SYMBOL	PROBABLE DAMAGE	PROBABLE MAXIMUM INTENSITY*
Low	I	Minor to Moderate	VI or VII
Moderate	II	Moderate	VII or VIII
High	III	Major	IX or X

\* Modified Mercalli Scale of 1931 (see opposite page)  
Applicable only to low-rise masonry and wood frame buildings

PRELIMINARY MAP--SUBJECT TO REVISION

CALIFORNIA DIVISION OF MINES AND GEOLOGY



APPENDIX #2

MERCED COUNTY  
CALIFORNIA



June 11, 1974

M 61 1175

JUN 11 1974

C. 1 1014400

To: The Los Banos City Council

In response to the Planning Director's letter dated May 28, 1974 concerning the preparation of this City's Seismic Safety Element of the General Plan, a copy of the "Preliminary Draft" of the Seismic Safety Element has been reviewed (by registered geologists Richard L. Mateman and John E. Isom).

An accurate geologic and seismic description of this region is an essential portion of the subject report. Without this information of existing local conditions, the seismic safety of the Los Banos area cannot be accurately evaluated.

We find the preliminary draft unacceptable as related to its coverage of the geology and seismology. The limited amount of geologic and seismic information presented in this report contains numerous errors, misinterpretations and discrepancies. There are available numerous accurate concise geological and seismological reports which should be referred to for timely and pertinent information. The Seismic Safety Element prepared by the Merced County Planning Department cannot be considered as one of these.

The potential hazard from earthquake damage to major civil engineering structures (San Luis Dam, O'Neill Dam, the San Luis Canal) was considered by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation design engineers. San Luis Dam has been designed to withstand the effects of an earthquake comparable in severity to the 1906 San Francisco event and with its epicenter in the Hollister Valley area. The earthquake resistant features of the dam include a wide core, wide filters, large shell, additional freeboard to handle settlement and seiches, core material resistant to progressive erosion, and the location of appurtenant structures located on firm rock foundations. Simulated earthquake tests were performed on the dam foundation clays. The results of these tests are included in Engineering Materials Reports Nos. EM-670 and EM-715 prepared by the Earth Sciences Branch of Division of General Research, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Engineering and Research Center, Denver.







In conclusion, having reviewed both the Los Banos City and Merced County Seismic Safety Elements, it is our concerted opinion that the geology and seismicity portions of such reports is beyond the scope of city or county agencies that do not have on their staff a Registered Geologist or Registered Engineering Geologist.

We would like to call your attention to Chapter 18.5 of the Business and Professions Code, which concerns registration of Geologists in the State of California. This chapter was enacted to introduce qualifying criteria in a previously unregulated professional field. "Such action recommends itself through benefits to the safety, health, and property of the people of California and to the promotion of the public welfare. These benefits are in the fields of geology as related to engineering, ground water, mineral exploration and development, geologic hazards, the further development of the science of geology, and other geologic matters of concern to the people of the state."

Signed:

  
Richard L. Bateman  
Registered Geologist #1919  
Certified Engineering  
Geologist #EG 613

  
John E. Isom  
Registered Geologist #235  
Certified Engineering  
Geologist #EG 122

Copy to: Department of Consumer Affairs  
State Board of Registration for  
Geologists and Geophysicists

Mr. Louis J. Angelo  
Joint Rules Committee  
of the California Legislature

Association of Engineering Geologists  
Sacramento, California

RLB-JEI/NEB



DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

DIVISION OF MINES AND GEOLOGY

DIVISION HEADQUARTERS

RESOURCES BUILDING, ROOM 1341

1616 NINTH STREET

SACRAMENTO, CA 95814



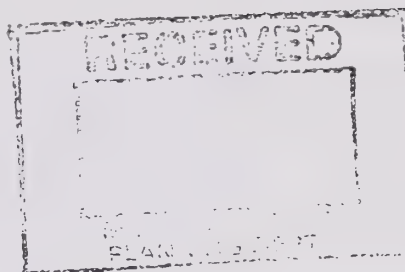
District Offices: LOS ANGELES

Junipero Serra Bldg., Rm. 1065  
107 South Broadway  
90012

SACRAMENTO

Resources Bldg., Rm. 118  
1416 Ninth Street  
95814

SAN FRANCISCO

Ferry Building  
94111July 24, 1974  
SacramentoMr. Hal F. Colwell  
Planning Director  
Merced County Planning Commissioner  
2140 "O" Street  
Merced, California 95340

Dear Mr. Colwell:

Here are the Division of Mines and Geology comments on the Seismic Safety Element to the General Plan of Merced County. In addition to the comments on the attached sheet, "Review of seismic safety element in city and county general plans by the California Division of Mines and Geology," the figures "1,000 or 2,000 years" or "several thousand years" for historically active faults or historic times (pages 59 and 87) should be changed to 200 years. Also, on page 89, "Division of Architecture" should read Office of Architecture and Construction.

Sincerely,

*C. Forrest Bacon*  
C. Forrest Bacon  
Geologist  
RG 1685 CEG 526

*Perry Y. Animoto*  
Perry Y. Animoto  
Geologist  
RCF 20375 CEG 460

CFB:FYA:ba

APPROVAL:

*James E. Slosson*  
James E. Slosson  
State Geologist  
RG 46 CEG 22



City Plan	
County Plan	MERCED COUNTY
File No.	74-70

SUPPORT DATA	REVIEW OF REPORT INDICATES THAT -		Report is Adequate Additional Data Needed		To be required by local ordinance	COMMENT
	yes	no	yes	no	yes	
Verification (maps where appropriate) of Seismic Hazards						
Surface Faulting						
. Location of active and potentially active faults.	X			X		
Past displacement and history of active faults.	X			X		
Ground Shaking						
* Tabulation of all earthquakes of magnitude 5.5 and above within 100 kilometers of the study boundary.	1/ X				X	1/ Not in tabular form and study not made with these criteria in mind, but study seems adequate.
* Maximum credible and maximum probable bedrock accelerations and a discussion of the risk or probabilities for damaging events.		X			X	
. Outline of areas of amplifying or damping effects of unconsolidated materials.	X			X		
Areas with the potential for ground failure due to:	X			X		2/The problem is well described, but potential areas should be better identified by map or other means.
Landslides.		X/2			X	
Liquefaction.	X			X		
Seismic settlement and differential compaction.		X			X	
* Lurching.						
Earthquake Induced Flooding (failure of dams or levees)	X/3			X		3/Information to be added as it becomes available from dam owners.
Sunamis (location)	NA			NA		
Beaches (location)	X			X		
References	X				X	
Geologic Report Prepared or Signed by a Geologist Registered in the State of California		X			X	
Criteria suggested by the CDMG and included in "General Plan Guide-						





Evaluation for Policies and Programs				
Criteria for identifying and abating existing structural hazards.	4/ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4/ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relation of seismic hazards to all mandated elements including housing, land use and circulation patterns.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Levels of risk defined for all seismic hazards and implementation.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local government policy on developments or structures in "Special Study" zones (Alquist-Priolo Act).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Implementation of Seismic Safety				
Updating the building code to reflect changes in technology.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5/ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Inclusion of appropriate requirements and procedures in zoning, subdivision and site development regulations and building codes. Designation of special zones with special land development regulations such as "seismic hazards management zones".	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5/ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Building inspection program to identify unsafe structures and instigate necessary corrective measures.	4/ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4/ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inclusion of potential earthquake destruction in contingency plans for major disasters and emergencies. Review and liaison with Emergency Preparedness Organizations and Police Department of overall plans and major public facilities proposals as to their adequacy in emergency situation.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Preparation of renewal plans for areas where a change in use and development pattern is necessary because of major seismic damage or extreme hazard.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Educational programs to develop community awareness of seismic hazards.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4/ These items, which require funding, will be further discussed and acted upon on July 23, 1974 public hearing.

5/ Wording should be stronger to require reinstatement of Chapter 70 WEC for county building code.



## ICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

OFFICE BOX 9577

SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95823



October 9, 1974

Michael W. Ensley  
Planning Director  
City of Los Banos  
Post Office Box 31  
Los Banos, Calif. 93635

Dear Mr. Ensley:

Please accept my apology for the delay in answering your letter regarding inundation maps.

I regret that the maps for San Luis, O'Neill Forebay, and Los Banos Dams have not yet been submitted to this office for review. However, we have been advised that the owner expects to complete the studies in late 1975.

If you have further questions, please contact this office.

Sincerely,

*H. D. Schleeter*

H. D. SCHLEETER  
Planning & Operations Division

cc: Region V





# CITY OF LOS BANOS

## SCENIC HIGHWAYS ELEMENT OF THE GENERAL PLAN

Prepared by  
**LOUIS A. LORENZO, JR.**  
Planning Aide  
January, 1975

Revised by  
**MICHAEL W. ENSLEY**  
Planning Director  
January, 1975

Adopted by  
**CITY COUNCIL**  
February 5, 1975



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## Introduction

The Scenic Highways Element of the General Plan is concerned with the preservation and enhancement of visual highway corridors within the Los Banos planning area. The goal of this element is the identification of significant visual corridors and the consideration of notable special features within these corridors. Furthermore, the Element outlines policies concerning the development of specific roadways identified as being scenic and proposes an implementation program suggesting methods whereby the Element can be effectuated.

The Scenic Highways Element is mandated by The California Government Code which was amended in 1973 to require that all cities and counties adopt a Scenic Highways Element of the General Plan. Section 65302(h) of the State Code reads as follows:

"The (general) plan shall include a scenic highway element for the development, establishment and protection of scenic highways pursuant to the provisions of Article 2.5 (commencing with Section 260) of Chapter 2 of Division 1 of the Streets and Highways Code."

In addition to the Administrative Code, the State has developed a policy on Scenic Highways entitled: The Scenic Route: A Guide for the Official Designation of Eligible Scenic Highways. The official policy-making body for this State program is the Scenic Highway Advisory Committee as initially established in 1963 through Senate Bill No. 1467 for the purpose of overseeing the entire State Scenic Highway Program.

The State Scenic Highway Program includes both Official





State Scenic Highways and Official County Scenic Highways. The former are listed in the "State Scenic Highway System: Program Report 1972" and the latter are noted on the Scenic Route Element of the Merced County General Plan. To be designated as scenic a highway must traverse a scenic corridor which is defined in the State General Plan Guidelines as "the visible land area outside the highway right-of-way and generally described as 'the view from the road' ".

There are two types of Scenic Highway designations: rural and urban. A Rural Designated Scenic Highway is identified by the State as a route that traverses a defined visual corridor within which all natural scenic resources and aesthetic value are protected and enhanced. The State also identifies an Urban Designated Scenic Highway as a route that traverses a defined visual corridor which offers an unhindered view of attractive urban scenes. The responsibility of corridor protection falls on the local jurisdiction having control over the use of land within the corridor.

The State General Plan Guidelines identify the Scenic Highways Element as relating directly to the Open Space and Circulation Elements of the General Plan, and indirectly to the Land Use Element. The integration of the Scenic Highways Element into the comprehensive plan hopefully, as with other elements, will result in an internally consistent and viable general plan.

#### Los Banos Scenic Corridors

Two Scenic Corridors have been identified in the Los



Banos planning area: Highway 152 from I-5 to the Los Banos City Limits, and Highway 165 from I-5 to Highway 140. In order to be officially designated in the State Scenic Highway System, these routes must meet the following State criteria:

1. The scenic corridor through which the highway or route passes should have consistent scenic, historic, or aesthetic value during all seasons.
2. Consideration should be given those highways or routes which are:
  - a. State or jurisdictional entry routes.
  - b. Predominately utilized for recreation or vacation travel.
  - c. Utilized for one-day sightseeing, or study, trips.
  - d. A part of an integrated, or semi-integrated, scenic route system that traverses varied scenic corridors for longer trips, and/or
  - e. Through areas of extraordinary scenic value.
  - f. Typical or demonstrative of varied scenic factors available within the jurisdiction.
3. If possible, all principal landscape and topographical type areas should be represented in the system.
4. Routes of historic significance which connect places of interest should be considered even though the route is of marginal scenic value.

#### Route 152

Route 152 from the eastern Santa Clara County limits to I-5 is officially adopted by the State as a Scenic Highway. The City concurs with Merced County's proposal to extend this scenic corridor from I-5 to the eastern City Limits of Los Banos because the route possesses quality scenic views of water courses, hillsides, orchards, pasture land, row crops, and, in addition, provides direct access to the following interest points: Canal





Farm Inn (State Historical Marker No. 548), original site of the City of Los Banos (State Historical Marker No. 550), Los Banos Historical Museum, Delta-Mendota Canal, and California Aqueduct. It also provides secondary access to other major attractions, including, San Luis Reservoir, O'Neill Forebay, San Luis Wasteway Waterfowl Management Area, and San Luis Island National Wildlife Refuge.

Special consideration should be given to the preservation of plant life and other scenic features along this route. This responsibility currently falls under the jurisdiction of Merced County as none of the Highway 152 Scenic Corridor is as yet within the corporate limits of the City. Control of site and structural design should be carefully reviewed within this scenic area and Zoning Ordinances should be fully enforced especially with regards to signs in order to protect this area.

In the near future, the City should create a specific plan for Highway 152 within the corporate limits of Los Banos. This plan should seek, through federal funds, to secure the following: additional rights-of-way; undergrounding of utilities; provisions for sidewalks; the planting of street trees; and sign control.

#### Route 165

Route 165, unlike Route 152, has not been designated on the State Master Plan as a scenic route. However, the City of Los Banos does recommend that Highway 165, from I-5 to Route



140, excluding that portion within the corporate limits of the City, be adopted by Merced County and the State of California as a scenic highway. Appendix No. 1 indicates that the Los Banos Area Recreation Commission concurs that the County of Merced should designate Highway 165 as a scenic route. The scenic designation for Highway 165 is based on its outstanding scenic quality and its uniqueness in providing access to two other scenic routes in this area, Route 152 and I-5. It also is a sightseeing and recreational route carrying motorists to: Los Banos State Waterfowl Area, San Luis Island Game Refuge, and numerous hunting clubs in the area. Route 165, from I-5 to 140, offers one of the most enjoyable drives in the County, providing natural and rustic views of hillside terrain, the San Joaquin River, sloughs, agricultural lands and wildlife refuges.

Wildlife forms in great variety and number are visible along this corridor. It is possible to view from Highway 165 the following wildlife: tule elk, coyotes, fox, last known sightings of kit fox (endangered species), rabbits, squirrels, possums, raccoons, badgers, blue herons, swans, ducks, hawks, mud hens (coot), geese, egrets, quail and pheasant.

Structures visible within this corridor should be maintained in good condition so as not to distract from the view. Both public and private property should be given adequate attention in this regard. Utilities should be placed underground wherever feasible. Implementation programs for the preservation and enhancement of the visual corridors will



necessitate the cooperation of the local, county, and state governments.

### Scenic Corridor Development Policy

Due to the scenic value outlines above, Highways 152, 165, and other routes which may in the future be designated as scenic, should be controlled by the following protective policies:

1. Regulating Future Land Uses

Land uses must be regulated to prevent the incursion of incompatible uses, which may detract from the scenic quality of the corridor. By limiting densities and access along these corridors the "scenic experience" will be enhanced.

2. Screening of Offensive Land Uses

Existing or indispensable offensive land uses should be screened from view, or inconspicuously located if within a scenic corridor. Effective screening can be accomplished by proper use of planting, grading, fencing.

3. Preserving Views of Vistas

Heights and setbacks of buildings should be regulated so as not to obstruct outstanding views.

4. Preserving Vegetative Cover

Concentrated efforts should be made to preserve and maintain trees and other plant life of outstanding value.

5. Stringent Sign Control

No off-premise outdoor advertising should be permitted within a scenic corridor, and provisions should be made for eliminating non-conformities. The size, height, number and type of on-premise signs allowed should be the minimum necessary for identification. The





design, color, texture and location of signs should relate to the surrounding environment.

6. Undergrounding of Utilities

New or relocated utility lines should be placed underground whenever feasible. Consideration should also be given to the underground placement or relocation of existing overhead lines. Poles of an improved design should be used wherever possible and setbacks of one thousand feet (1,000') should be implemented when undergrounding is not feasible.

7. Property Maintenance

Owners of private or public properties visible within the corridor should be encouraged through this element and other means to maintain structures in good condition and keep grounds free from trash, undesirable growth, or other objectionable uses.

8. Development Design

Site plan and architectural review will be required of all development within a designated scenic corridor of the City.

Implementation

The following outline of implementative actions should be considered for the establishment of a high quality scenic route system:

1. The adoption of this Scenic Highways Element of the General Plan.
2. The enforcement of existing zoning, building, health, and fire codes for the preservation of the scenic qualities of the scenic route system.
3. The adoption of an ordinance similar to the one recommended by the State in Appendix No. 2.
4. The encouragement of citizens' organizations and private individuals in the participation of programs to assist in upgrading and preserving



scenic corridors.

5. The investigation of available funds for acquisition and development of open space easements and development rights in scenic corridors.
6. The effective regulation of litter and weed control, and appropriate punishment for the violation of said controls.
7. The immediate placement of scenic route identification signs at pre-determined intervals along all designated scenic route rights-of-way.
8. The solicitation of gifts or dedications of land by private parties for development for scenic purposes.

#### Conclusion:

Many roadscares in and around Los Banos contain outstanding natural and rustic vistas that provide enjoyment and satisfaction to those of us fortunate enough to be in contact with them. These scenic areas are of value to the community and should be preserved for future generations. The adoption of this element will provide the initial step in preserving and enhancing scenic areas within the Los Banos planning area.





## REFERENCES

California Council on Intergovernmental Relation. General Plan Guidelines. September, 1973.

California Department of Public Works. State Scenic Highway System: Program Report 1972. January, 1973.

California Department of Transportation. The Scenic Route: A Guide for the Official Designation of Scenic Highways. August, 1973.

City of Merced. "Environmental Resources Management Plan". Merced, California.

Department of Community Development. "Scenic Highways Element, Pleasanton General Plan". Pleasanton, California. October, 1973.

Lower, Mary. Vice-Chairman, Los Banos Planning Commission. Los Banos, California.

Lower, Scott. Los Banos City Council. Los Banos, California.

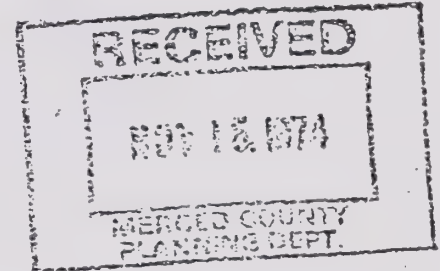
Merced County Planning Department. "Scenic Route Element of the General Plan (proposed)". Merced, California. October, 1974.



## APPENDIX NO. 1

November 14, 1974

Mr. Colwell, Planning Director  
Planning Department  
Courthouse Park  
Merced, California 95340



Dear Mr. Colwell

The Los Banos Area Parks & Recreation Commission at their November 5 meeting voted unanimously to recommend to the county that they adopt old Highway 33 to Gustine and Highway 165 to I-5 into their Scenic Route Element to be adopted into the counties general plan.

Your consideration of this request would be greatly appreciated.

Best Regards,

Tim McNally, Secretary  
Los Banos Area Parks &  
Recreation Commission.

TM:sa



ORDINANCE

to preserve the beauty and scenic character of those portions  
of (State Highway Rte.) designated as scenic corridors  
by the State of California, the people of (City or County)  
do ordain as follows:

- . Current land use can be changed in the direction of  
reverting to nature without reference to this governing  
body. Changing current land use in the direction of  
changing the character or type of land use or intensi-  
fication of current usage or development of any kind  
may be done only with the approval of this governing  
body.
- . In requesting approval for a change in land use, the  
landowner shall submit a detailed plan of the proposed  
change including a site plan showing the existing site  
conditions and the effects on the site by the proposed  
change. The proposed change in land use will be required  
to be compatible with the General Plan of development  
for the (City or County) where such is in existence.  
The Board will approve only such plans of change in land  
use which are compatible with the General Plan and which  
otherwise do not contribute materially to the deteriora-  
tion of the scenic character of the zone. The detailed





land and site plan shall consist of drawings showing the parcel of land involved, its relationship to surrounding parcels, topographic features, typical profiles of significance, elevations and cross sections, where pertinent, descriptions of existing site and land use and proposed site and land use, photographs -- aerial or terrestrial, colored or black and white, and any other information deemed useful or necessary to determine the impact of the proposed change on the scenic character of the environment.

3. Off-site outdoor advertising within the scenic corridor will not be permitted. Signs are permitted which:
  1. advertise the sale or lease of the property,
  2. designate the name of the owner or occupant of the premises, or
  3. advertise goods manufactured or produced or services rendered on the property;

except that signs which move or have animated or moving parts or are illuminated by moving or flashing lights will not be permitted. Non-conforming signs shall be removed within one year of adoption of this ordinance.

4. Landscaping areas of scenic corridors shall be compatible with the provisions of the Scenic Element of the General Plan of the (City or County) . Earthmoving operations which expose soil surfaces to the elements shall be followed



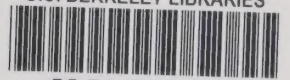
by operations to reestablish vegetation to bind the soil together so as to prevent water or wind erosion, and reestablish a natural vegetation appearance.

5. The design and appearance of new structures and/or equipment proposed shall be compatible with the scenic setting or environment and shall not conflict with the Scenic Element of the General Plan.





U.C. BERKELEY LIBRARIES



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